

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF
THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

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FIRST INSTALLMENT NEVERMORE!

"If you feel a craving to call me names," Max Lamar used to say, "call me a horse thief or a mental error or even a dove of peace. But, unless you want to start trouble, don't call me a detective. I'm not a detective. I am a crime specialist."

He had served for years on the city's crack central office detective squad. Then, while he was still under thirty, he had laid down enough money and laid up enough reputation to leave the force and go into business for himself.

In his office sat Lamar, one spring morning, trying to coax a sulky cigar into good behavior and, between puffs, dictating a letter to Edith Hayes, his stenographer.

A clerk hurried in from the ante-room, laid a special delivery letter on his chief's desk and vanished again into his own domain. At sight of the envelope's handwriting some of the unusual laziness left Lamar's face and manner. At a glance down the single official sheet of paper as he ripped it from the envelope, the very last trace of indolence was gone.

"Miss Hayes," he said, "the ball game to day will lack its most ardent fan. And never mind finishing that letter. I'll have to get out of here in—looking at his watch—"in just twenty minutes. I've got to go to prison."

"Mr. Lamar!" stammered the girl, still too new in her employer's service to know when he was in earnest.

"It's true," he answered. "Listen to this."

He picked up the note and read aloud:

"Mr. Max Lamar, Crime Specialist.
"My Dear Max: 'Circle' Jim Borden goes free again at noon today. Since you entered private practice I have no one familiar with the methods of this master crook. Please keep an eye on him."
RANDOLPH ALLEN,
"Chief of Police."

"I—I don't understand," said the stenographer. "If you're in business for yourself, why should the chief of police be giving you orders?"

"He isn't. He's giving me a chance. A chance he knows I'd be willing to pay for with a couple of my eye teeth."



He Pushed the Panting Ted Through This Opening.

That's why he wrote to me. Old 'Circle' Jim is my quarry. I've landed him three times for the chief, and it looks as if I were going to make it a fourth. Jim can't keep out of jail. Because he can't keep out of crime. And he can't keep out of crime on account of the Red Circle."

"The Red Circle," she echoed. "A circle of anarchists?"

"No. A circle of Jim Borden's. A circle on the back of his right hand. A circle he gets his nickname from. A red birthmark, like a hoop or ring, in the flesh of the hand. Sometimes it hardly shows. Sometimes it blazes an angry crimson. He—"

"But what has a birthmark got to do with his being a criminal?" asked the puzzled girl. "I don't see—"

"Neither do I. But it's true. I've heard some sort of a rumormongering about this birthmark running through his family ever so far back, and that whenever it appears it's a sign of a criminal. All nonsense, perhaps. I don't know. But I do know that old 'Circle' Jim Borden is one of the craftiest, most inveterate criminals in this state. And if he's out of prison it means trouble to the whole community. There was a yarn at headquarters that the old fox has a hiding place some-

where in town that no outsider was ever able to find. It may be worth hunting for. He has a son, too, knocking around the city. A cheap tough, of the cigarette-eating type. I suppose he's arranged to meet him. He'll bear watching, too, now that his old man's out."

Max Lamar was not the prison's only voluntary guest that noon. The grim old archway leading to hopelessness was graced by the presence of two women who were frequent and welcome visitors to the place—June Travis and her sweet-faced mother.

June was a girl of rare beauty, both of soul and of face. Impatient at the idle, futile life of the girls in her own walk of life, she had chosen to change much of her comfortable leisure into toll in behalf of released prisoners.

Today June had heard that "Circle" Jim Borden's sentence was to expire at noon. So noon found her and her mother in the warden's office, awaiting the convict's appearance.

The door of the warden's office opened. A keeper stepped into the room, ushering in a square-built man of fifty.

The man with the keeper was clad in an ill-fitting suit of gray; bearing in its every badly cut line the unmistakable sign of "prisonmade."

Yet, in that heavy face were marks of intellect, character, power. At sight of him, June's heart gave a queer little throb. She did not know why.

The warden rose to his feet, smiling, and stretching out his hand to the newcomer.

"Good-by, Jim," he said, pleasantly. "I hope you're going to take a brace this time. You can do it, if you try. There's plenty of chance for you yet, if—"

His professionally cheerful voice gradually died away, and his outstretched hand dropped to his side as he saw the sullen contempt in the convict's sunken eyes.

"Circle" Jim said no word in reply. He made no move to accept the proffered hand. Then, as the warden ceased to speak, the man turned to leave the room.

"Hold on, Jim," interposed the warden. "This young lady wants to speak to you."

"You are going to let me help you," she pleaded. "You are going to let me be of use to you—to be your friend?"

"Friend!" grimly repeated Borden, the prison "rasp" making his deep voice sound as though it needed oiling. "Friend? Hell!"

"But I want to help you!" she urged, undaunted. "I want you to make a man of yourself. It is not too late. If not for your own sake, then for your wife's—"

A spasm of pain twisted the heavy features. But at once he regained control of himself.

"My wife," he said, shortly, "is dead."

"Oh, I'm so sorry! so sorry," said June in quick sympathy. "But—but surely you have someone—some daughter or son—for whose sake you can live honestly. Some son, perhaps, for whom you can set a splendid example of manhood—of—"

"Circle" Jim shook away her gentle hand, in a violent shudder. Then he bolted from the room, pushing past the keeper who, after an inquiring glance at the warden, let him go.

"You see how it is, Miss Travis," began the warden.

But June was not there. She had sped after the retreating convict. Mrs. Travis, worried at her daughter's impetuous pursuit of such a hopeless case, bade the warden good-by and followed.

Meantime, as a guard threw open the gate leading from the prison to the street outside, June caught up with Borden.

"I hurt your feelings, I'm afraid," she accosted him timidly, as he paused a moment, irresolute, on the pavement. "But I didn't mean to. Honestly, I didn't. And I'm sorry. Please forgive me, Mr. Borden. I know how bitterly you must feel toward everyone. But I do want you to let me do something for you. If it angers you to have me talk to you, won't you at least take this, to help you along until you can find steady work?"

As she spoke, she drew from her wristbag a little roll of bills; and thrust them into the convict's calloused left hand.

The well-meant act scoured Borden, from contemptuous apathy, into flaming rage. His gnarled fist gripped tight on the money, crushing it to a wad. Then he flung it to the pavement and turned sharply away.

Again the girl sought to detain him. At her touch he whirled savagely upon her; his lips drawn back from his yellowed teeth; his left fist clenched and half-raised, as if to strike.

This was too much for the chivalrous gate guard. He flung himself upon Borden, catching the upraised arm and thrusting him back from the frightened girl. The thrust sent "Cir-

cle" Jim caroming against a clean-cut young man who had just rounded the corner toward the gate.

"Scuse me, Mr. Lamar," began the guard. "He—"

Jim had recovered his balance and, disregarding the others, strode toward June; muttering angry incoherences. Lamar, in one double gesture, slipped his own athletic body between the two and drew a revolver from his hip pocket.

He leveled the weapon at Borden who instinctively threw up his hands. As he did so, the guard plinked him from behind.

"Here," said Lamar, briskly, as he pocketed the revolver and pulled out a pair of shining little handcuffs. "Help me put these on him."

"No! No!" begged June. "It was my fault. Please let him go. Please do!"

Lamar shrugged his shoulders.

"Turn him loose," he ordered the guard.

And "Circle" Jim scuttled off, down the street, like a bullet-grazed wolf. Lamar turned to June, raising his soft hat.

"I hope he didn't frighten you," he said. "Really, you shouldn't have interceded for him, just now. If you had let us arrest him—"

"I'm glad I didn't," she made answer. "And thank you for coming to my aid, Mr. Lamar. 'Oh, here is my mother. I want you to meet her.'"

As Lamar helped the two ladies into their car, a few minutes later, he had the joy of hearing June say:

"Won't you come and see us—and tell us more about your work?"

Sputtering some half-coherent reply, the usually cool-headed man stood staring in foolish happiness after the car.

With a start he came to himself. He had hastened to the prison to see "Circle" Jim Borden released, and to follow him. And—all because of one girl—he had quite forgotten Jim's



"I Hurt Your Feelings, I'm Afraid!"

very existence, and had let him get clean away.

Ted Borden was out of a job. This was no novelty to him. Though he was barely twenty-two, this was the eighth position he had managed to lose. There were but three things on earth in which the lad felt even a languid interest. These were cigarettes, ten-cent whisky and loafing.

This morning he had come to the factory two hours late. A little after noon he had secretly lighted a cigarette in the varnish room. The superintendent had caught him at it, in time to avert a blaze, and had forthwith discharged him.

With half a week's pay in his pocket, Ted had repaired to the Golden Star saloon, the headquarters of his select crowd of friends.

At the end of an hour Ted had slouched out of the place, penniless; considerably more than half-drunk.

Ted had had a vague idea of going to the ball game. Now that that was out of the question, he presently decided to loaf around to the square in front of the Chronicle office and watch the score.

Ted knew his father was a crook. And he had always resented Jim's efforts to keep him straight, deemed those pitiful attempts the acme of hypocrisy.

Ted had reached the Square. He paused in the outer fringe of the throng that watched the baseball bulletins. His gaze fell on the portly meridian of the man standing next to him.

The man was staring ecstatically upward at the score board. His coat was open. From the pocket of his jutting waistcoat hung a jeweled watchfob.

Ted's mouth grew dry and his dull eyes brightened. Hot temptation gripped and shook him.

So intent did his every faculty all at once become that he did not hear a man come up behind him, halt abruptly and murmur his name.

Out crept Ted's hand, nearer and nearer to the coveted watch. Now his fingertips had closed lovingly on the fob. Then, at the same time, two things happened.

The watch's owner felt the touch of the clumsy fingers, glanced downward; made a grab at the nicotine-stained digits and shouted "Thief!" On the same instant "Circle" Jim Borden (who had caught sight of his son

as he passed the crowd's outskirts, and who had come up behind him) groaned aloud in mortal anguish, seized Ted by the nape of the neck and forcibly hauled him away.

The watch's owner bawled "Stop Thief," and gave chase. The cry was taken up, as others in the crowd saw "Circle" Jim dart nimbly into a by-street, still propelling the half-stupefied youth ahead of him.

As father and son rounded the corner, Max Lamar was crossing the lower end of the Square. He heard the cries; saw the chase begin, and had a fleeting glimpse of Borden just before he and Ted disappeared.

The man for whom Max had vainly been searching all afternoon! Lamar whipped out a police whistle, blew a shrill blast, then ran at full speed down the street around whose corner Borden and Ted had vanished.

With Lamar, a brace of policemen and a score of volunteer man-hunters in hot pursuit, Borden continued his flight.

Down one street, across another he raced; the pursuit ever within sound and once or twice within sight. Into the mouth of an alleyway he plunged and on till he reached a spot where a poster-decked fence adjoined the corner of a building.

There was a foot or so of space between building and fence.

He shoved the panting Ted through this opening; followed; pushed the loosened board back in place and stood an instant to get his breath.

He and his son were in a disused lumberyard. His hasty glance met no human being. But that was because his glance was so extremely hasty and because his prison-weakened eyes were no longer so keen as of yore.

For he and Ted were not the yard's only human occupants. The Pirate King, in private life, was Ignatius Aloysius McQuaid; intimately known as "Spudsy." He was four

feet eight inches tall, and he was the only son and heir of the garbage-collector who lived two doors down the alley.

Spudsy had long ago discovered the unused old lumberyard, and had converted it into a pirate ship; with a pile of corner boards as quarter-deck.

This afternoon, as he paced his quarter-deck, growling merciless orders to his imaginary crew, Spudsy was suddenly aware of the two men who burst into the yard.

He saw the elder of the two men—a gray-haired, ghastly-faced old fellow—release the younger man whom he had been grasping by the collar. He saw the old fellow drop on his knees and dig in the timber debris like a dog that is digging for woodchucks.

He saw him push his hand downward into the mass of shavings and shingles and grope for something. Then he saw him lift a trapdoor, to whose top a coating of chips and scantling ends still adhered.

The man lifted the trapdoor part way, shoved the younger man in through the opening; crawled through it after him, and lowered the trapdoor above them so carefully that the scraps of wood were not disturbed.

Spudsy stared, goggle-eyed. Here was the most delightful mystery of the centuries. The woodyard was not only a pirate ship. It was a treasure cave as well. Cautiously he climbed down from the quarter-deck and made for the spot where the trapdoor had been raised and lowered. He bent over the trap, brushing away the concealing wood. Then he saw a shadow fall across the debris and he looked up. Over him stood a man—tall, well dressed; his firm mouth just now smiling friendly down upon the cowering child.

"Digging for gold, Johnny?" he asked pleasantly; and at sound of the kind voice Spudsy's fright vanished.

"No, sir," answered the boy. "I'm just lookin' for the place where them two guys ran into the ground."

"Into the—what?" demanded Lamar, in quick interest.

"Into the ground," responded Spudsy. "They beat it into here through that place in the fence an' one of 'em—an old geezer with gray hair—he digs here a minute an' then he ups with a trapdoor an' down they scoots."

Max Lamar was on his knees, frantically pushing the chips and shingles to left and right.

"He boosts up the trap with his

right hand," continued Spudsy, delighted with the interest his words evoked. "An' on the back of his hand there was a big red ring, like it was painted there."

"The Red Circle!" muttered Lamar; and just then he found the ring of the trapdoor.

"Then he paused, as if in thought. Presently he took out one of his cards and scribbled on it: 'Need Aid. Follow Boy.'"

"Take this card to the first policeman you can find," he said. "Lead him here, and then go somewhere and have an ice cream cone debauch. Hurry now! Chase!"

As Spudsy scampered off on his mission Max Lamar drew his revolver and stepped down through the trapdoor into the passage beyond.

Along that same passageway, not five minutes earlier, "Circle" Jim Borden had propelled his drunken son. Through what seemed to Ted a mile of underground wanderings, they sped. At last, Jim had pushed upward. Another trapdoor had yielded to the push, and the father and son had crawled out of the passage into a poorly furnished and ill-lighted room.

A bedroom adjoined this first dusty apartment. These rooms had for years been Jim Borden's unsuspected hiding place.

Jim partly led, partly carried him into the adjoining bedroom and threw him heavily upon the cot, which, with one chair, formed the room's sole furnishing. Ted took scant note of his surroundings and was soon in a drunken sleep.

Jim, spent with his run, collapsed upon the rickety chair beside the cot and looked down in gloomy disgust upon his snoring son.

"The last of the Borden!" he mused. "We two. My son and I. I hoped—I was fool enough to hope—back there in that hell of a living tomb—that Ted might redeem us. That he might prove to be the salvation of our name. And now—a thief. The cheapest, meanest, lowest type of thief! There's no hope. The sooner the Borden's go, the sooner a menace to society will be done away with. We must go; he and I."

With fingers that did not tremble, he turned on the solitary gas jet; then, with one last look at the sleeping boy, he left the room, closing the door behind him.

"He will never know!" muttered Borden, as he came out into the other room. "He will die in his sleep. Gas is mercifully painless. And now it's my own turn. My own—turn. A quicker death and less easy to bear than—"

He checked himself; the big shoulders tensing; head thrust forward, eyes aghast. For, almost under his feet, he heard a muffled sound of someone stumbling in the dark.

Borden understood. His secret hiding place had been discovered.

Noiselessly, he slipped to the trap door, and stood crouching and alert just behind its hinge. A second later, the trap began to rise. Inch by inch it was lifted from below.

A pistol muzzle protruded from the narrow opening; then a hand, an arm, and a human head.

One lightning look revealed to the crouching Borden the face of Max Lamar. In the same instant, "Circle" Jim launched himself upon his foe.

He seized Max by the wrist and, with one mighty tug, dragged him up into the room, slamming the trap shut behind him.

"Hands up!" snarled Borden. "Up! Up!—So!"

He stood for a moment glaring in cold triumph at his helpless enemy. Then he spoke; slowly, hungrily, from between hard-clenched teeth.

"Sit down!" he said.

"Max Lamar," he said in the same slow, deep voice that robbed his words of any melodrama taint, "You've sent me to prison three times. Now, I've got you."

Lamar's eye roved from the black pistol muzzle to the scarred hand that held it so menacingly.

"I see you still have the Red Circle, Jim," he said, as if to make conversation.

He was playing for time.

"Red Circle," repeated Borden, dully. "Yes. The Red Circle. It is still there, on my hand. Always there. And it has always marked one member in every generation of my family. And the person it marked has always been a criminal."

"Here it ends," said Borden again; "I am going to wipe out the curse by wiping out my family. My son is in that bedroom—dying. I shall go next. With this gun I am going to shoot myself, after I have squared an old score by killing you."

Borden, as he spoke, raised the revolver a few inches, and his finger tightened on the trigger. Lamar, gathering all his strength, lunged suddenly forward, clutching Jim's wrist and twisting it to one side. The bullet went wild. In another instant, the table was overturned, and the two men locked in furious embrace.

Presently, in the deathlock, Lamar's fingers found the catch that held the pistol's cylinder in place. One sharp pressure and he had "broken" the revolver, sending the remaining cartridges pattering harmless to the floor.

Jim released his hold on the useless weapon and snatched with both hands for Lamar's throat. But before the grip could be gained or guarded, he recoiled a step; his eyes glassy and staring; his wild gaze fixed on something behind Max.

Up through the trapdoor two policemen were climbing—summoned by Spudsy as they had stood chatting together on a street corner.

With a roar of fury, Borden snatched up the overturned table and hurled it with all his force at the charging policemen.

"He boosts up the trap with his

Lamar did not join in the triple fight. His keen nostrils had caught the smell of escaping gas. He remembered all at once what Borden had said: "My son is in that bedroom—dying!" And he ran to the bedroom door, opened it and entered.

The two policemen, stalwart as they were, found "Circle" Jim unexpectedly hard to subdue. The old man was fighting like a beast at bay. Nor was he fighting to escape. For he made no move to tear himself free from his opponents.

Instead, he seemed to be trying to get hold of the pistol that one of the two policemen still held.

Like Samson of old, he put forth his power of muscle. And, before his captors could so much as guess his intent, he had twisted the policeman's



"On the Back of His Hand They Was a Big Red Ring!"

hand toward him, so that the pistol muzzle pressed against his own body just above the heart.

The same wrench enabled Jim to force aside the policeman's trigger finger. His own forefinger slipped inside the trigger guard.

One pressure of the finger and the shot was fired.

The policemen relaxed their hold, as Jim Borden spasmodically leaped in air and staggered backward, a .44 bullet through his heart.

The big body hurtled to the floor and lay there.

"Circle" Jim Borden, cornered, had killed himself.

The officers were roused from the momentary reaction following their death battle by the appearance of Lamar, who reeled out of the bedroom, a gush of pungent gas-reek enveloping him.

In his arms, Max bore a lifeless body. The body of Ted Borden.

Entering the bedroom, Lamar had been well-nigh overcome by the fumes of gas that had by this time turned the tiny place into a veritable asphyxiation chamber.

He had caught up the one rickety chair and, stifling and dizzy, had smashed open the window with it. After leaning out for a moment, to get back his breath and to steady the whirling of his brain, he had crossed to the bed, seized Ted's limp body and had borne it out to the purer air of the next room.

There he laid the boy beside his father and, kneeling, felt his pulse and listened at the narrow chest for sound of heartbeats.

Presently he rose, a new solemnity in his alert eyes. Turning to the two panting officers, he said, very quietly:

"Our work here is done. They are both dead. It is—it is the end of the Red Circle!"

The double inquest was over. The last report was made. Max Lamar's work of "keeping an eye" on Jim Borden was finished for all time.

From police headquarters he set out toward his own office. The horror of the Red Circle tragedy was still heavy upon him. His own part in it and his narrow escape from death had left a mark on his usually steady nerve.

He was tired of gruesome mysteries. He wanted something to take his mind off the events of the past two days.

June Travis had asked him to call. He intended to take her at her word. Just then a limousine that had been drawn up beside the curb, just in front of him, started off. Carelessly, Lamar glanced at it. He could not see the occupants. He had no special desire to see them.

But he was attracted by the sight of a woman's hand—white, shapely, dainty—that lay carelessly on the seat of the car's open window.

At first, it was its beauty that drew Max's notice. But, just at the instant the limousine whizzed away, he had a closer look. And a startled cry broke from him.

For, vividly clear upon the snowy surface of the hand-back, glared the Red Circle!

Lamar barely had time, as the car vanished in a swirl of traffic, to catch sight of its number. With shaking fingers he jotted down in his note book:

"Cal: 126694. The Red Circle!" he babbled dazedly, "The Red Circle—again!"

(END OF FIRST INSTALLMENT.)

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

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SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, who derives his name from an angry red birthmark on the back of his right hand, is about to be released from prison after serving his third term. It is a matter of history that one member of every generation of the Borden family has been branded with the Red Circle birthmark and that member has always been a criminal. Jim and his wayward son, Ted Borden, are the only known living representatives of the Borden line. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on "Circle Jim." Mrs. Travis and her mother, members of the wealthy set who are interested in the reform of ex-convicts, meet Borden as he is released. "Circle Jim" catches his son in the act of stealing. Realizing that his family is a menace to society, he enters the bedroom where Ted is sleeping and turns on the gas. Meanwhile, Lamar chances upon an underground passage where "Circle Jim" has taken refuge and in a fight Jim is killed. "The last of the Borden" and the end of the Red Circle," says Lamar. But the next day he is astonished by the sight of a woman's hand scribbled down the number on the license plate.

SECOND INSTALLMENT

"PITY THE POOR!"

A fox, living in a forest full of rabbits, is likely to grow fat. George Grant dwelt in a community of human rabbits, men who needed money and needed it so badly that they were ready to pay any price to get it. Grant did not grow fat on their needs. But his bank account did.

He was the city's most prosperous loan broker, which meant he was also the city's most heartless loan shark. His offices were forever crowded with needy clients. His big desk was full of tabulated pigeonholes. And every pigeonhole was stacked with a piteous array of promissory notes, of mortgages, of eight drafts, and similar sorry documents.

One day—it was the same that Max Lamar caught his fleeting glance of the Red Circle on a woman's white hand, as a closed automobile whizzed past him—George Grant got up from this famous desk in his private office, stretched his lean arms lazily, and went into the adjoining room where stood his capacious steel vault.

Entering the vault and switching on the electric light, he began to search through the tiers of compartments along the rear wall. The paper he wanted was not easy to find, and his search continued for several minutes.

At last, he discovered what he sought. Consulting the document, he made one or two notes from it on the back of an envelope; then switched off the light and turned to leave the vault.

But, instead of the sunshine from the office beyond, he faced black darkness. The vault door had been shut.

So silently had it closed that, engrossed in his search, he had not observed it was no longer open.

Grant pushed against the steel door. It did not yield to the pressure. It had been shut tight.

Grant drew in a deep breath and shouted at the top of his lungs. The vault resounded deafeningly to his belated shout. But the thick walls absorbed the sound.

Turning back into the vault and switching on the light once more, he pulled out a steel cashbox from its compartment and, using it as a bludgeon, began to hammer with desperate force on the unyielding door, punctuating his blows with shouts for help.

After an interminable time, a clerk—John Saals by name—who chanced to pass through the adjoining room,

ing near the entrance of a small park. The chauffeur was in his seat, unconcerned, as though in front of his own employer's door.

Lamar and the chief tumbled out of their car before it had fairly stopped; and they ran at top speed toward the captured limousine.

The tannet of the limousine was empty.

Grant was dancing in fury and shaking his fist at his mildly surprised chauffeur.

"What d'ye mean by it?" he shrieked. "What'n blazes d'ye mean by it, Garvice?"

The chauffeur had been fumbling in his pocket. Now he produced a card, and sullenly handed it to his employer.

"There's your own orders," he growled.

Lamar, glancing over Grant's shoulder, saw the card was George Grant's own; and that on it, above the name, was scrawled in pencil:

O. K. Take bearer where she wishes.

"Well! I'll be—I'll be—" spluttered the bewildered Grant.

"Where is she? What became of her?" demanded Lamar.

"Which way did she go?" persisted Lamar.

"Down that path to the left. Funny business, I call it, to—"

Lamar had already started in the direction the chauffeur pointed out; and the chief and Grant ranged alongside of him as he strode along.

"We'll look down this path to the end," suggested the chief. "And then we'll separate and quarry the whole park for her. She may have left the park at the far side."

But the veiled woman in black had not left the park. She had merely left the park path and had crept into the shrubbery.

She sped along like a black wraith; nonetheless, furtive, uncanny. Once she raised her right hand to part some bushes that barred her way. The hand was small, white, infinitely graceful in contour. But on its back throbbed an angry crimson scar; outlined like an irregular ring.

Through the high bushes she crept; and into a tiny glade hemmed in by shrubbery. There she halted. Deftly

was in my vault just now, the door was shut on me and a lot of notes of people who owe me money were stolen out of my desk.

"My clerk says he saw a veiled woman go into my office. She was seen coming out again with a handful of documents bound up in a rubber band. And when I went down to my car," he continued in mounting excitement, "she'd stolen that, too. And my chauffeur—"

"What was the number?" asked the chief, taking out a pencil and drawing a scratch-pad toward him.

"The number of my car? It was 126,694."

"The device it was!" cried Lamar, dropping the license book and striding forward. Lamar produced a card and handed it to Chief Allen.

"That's the number I jotted down," he said. "The number of the car with the Red Circle woman in it."

"126,694!" read the chief.

"What's that? What's that?" demanded Grant eagerly.

Brusquely he snatched the card from the chief. It slipped from his awkward fingers as he grasped it, and fell to the floor beneath the window sill.

Grant stooped to pick it up. As he rose, his gaze fell on the busy street just outside, with its hurrying traffic on sidewalk and asphalt.

At the same moment a big automobile wriggled out of a vehicle-jam and flashed past the window. Grant gave one incredulous look, then bawled:

"There's my car! There it is, now! See!"

"Come on!" exclaimed the chief as he bolted from the room with Lamar and Grant at his heels.

At the outer entrance of police headquarters a motor-cycle policeman was dismounting.

"Follow that car!" ordered the chief. "That limousine there. The number's 126,694. Get it!"

In the alley at the side of police headquarters a departmental automobile was awaiting. The chief gave a swift command to its drowsing chauffeur, then jumped into the tonneau, Lamar and Grant piling in after him.

Some time later, they had come to a jarring standstill alongside the automobile they sought. It was stand-

she slipped out of the shapelessly enveloping black coat. The coat was lined with white satin. The woman's dress also was snow white. With quick skill, she proceeded to fold the coat inside out, in such way that no portion of the black was visible. Then she draped it carelessly over her white-sleeved arm.

Raising both hands to her head, she undid the thick black veil, took it off, rolled it into a ball and tossed it into the bushes.

A black-clad woman, shrouded in an impenetrable veil, had entered the thicket. Less than a minute later, a girl in white dress and white toque, and carrying on her arm a white wrap, emerged upon the farther path, and sauntered in leisurely fashion toward the park's opposite entrance.

Once, she glanced nervously at the back of her right hand. But at once her frown of apprehension cleared away. The Red Circle had again become invisible.

Lamar, hastening along the path, with Grant and the chief, saw a beautiful girl, all in white, coming toward him around a bend in the walk. At a glance he recognized her.

"Miss Travis!" he exclaimed, clasping the white hand she held out to him. "This is good luck! I didn't know this park was a favorite walk of yours."

"Oh, but it is!" laughed June, "I love it. It's so quiet and pretty. But I didn't expect to find a busy detective wandering dreamily about in it. I thought detectives were always—"

"Crime specialist, please, Miss Travis," interrupted Lamar. "That is, if you don't mind. If you know how I hate that word, 'detective'—"

She became aware of his companions, who stood a pace or two distant, fuming at the delay.

"I won't detain you, Mr. Crime Specialist," she said, gayly; adding, as she moved away: "But, don't forget, you promised to call and tell me about your work."

"Did you suppose I could forget it?" he made answer. "And—may I call tomorrow afternoon? Are you going to be at home?"

"Why, yes. Please come then. Good-by."



The Office Force Crowded Around While the Cashier Unlocked the Vault.

When June reached her own home, her mother and Mary (her old nurse) were on the veranda. She hurried past them with scarce a word and went straight to her own room. There, from the front of her dress, she drew out a sheaf of papers fastened with a rubber band. The uppermost paper of the package was an official form, filled in with ink. It read:

June 12, 1915.

Seven days from date, or to pay I promise to pay George Grant ten dollars (\$10), as first installment on my loan of one hundred dollars (\$100), plus interest at the rate of 10 per cent a week. Total payment due, \$20.

(Signed) John L. Peterson.

June Travis' fingers rifled the sheaf. Most of the papers were of much the same nature as was the first, and for varying sums, at exorbitant interest. Each document was mute witness to a tale of poverty and of the greedy advantage Grant had taken of such poverty.

Gathering up the papers, June went into her sitting room, placed a chair in front of a typewriter and began to tap away at the keys. For a full hour she wrote a bare half-dozen lines on each sheet—addressing an envelope for each.

Without waiting to put on her hat she ran downstairs and out of the house by a rear door, to a nearby mailbox. In this she posted her stack of letters, and made her way back to her sitting room, unnoticed. After which, she once more picked up the documents stolen from George Grant's desk; crumpled them into a ball; set a match to them; held them until they were ablaze; and tossed them into the fireplace.

"There goes a sheaf of heartaches!" she sighed. "Oh, if only all poverty could be destroyed as easily!"

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Mary, June's nurse, was more a servant of the Travis family than a servant. She had lived with Mrs. Travis since long before June was born; she had comforted the stricken wife when her husband died; she had loved June from the day of the win-

some girl's birth.

Early next morning, while she was putting the sitting room to rights, Mary chanced to see half a charred

piece of paper lying on the hearth. She picked it up. On the unburned half of the paper, she read:

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lined face paling and an unaccountable shudder convulsing her slender old body.

"Well," resumed June, "just a few hours after I left the prison, all at once I had the strangest sensation. It seemed to start in my brain and go all over me. It was as if something had snapped, in my soul. I can't explain it. And the strangest impulses came surging through my mind. I—I felt like a criminal!"

"Dearie!"

"I did. I felt as a criminal must feel. I felt a craving to commit crime; a love for its perils, a hideous

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THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, who derives his quoted name from an angry red birthmark on the back of his right hand, is about to be released from prison after serving his third term. It is a matter of history that one member of every generation of the Borden family has been branded with the Red Circle birthmark and that member has always been a criminal. Jim and his wayward son, Ted Borden, are the only known living representatives of the Borden kin. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on "Circle Jim." June Travis and her mother, members of the wealthy set who are interested in the reform of ex-convicts, meet Borden as he is released. "Circle Jim" catches his son in the act of stealing. Realizing that his family is a menace to society, he enters the bedroom where Ted is sleeping and turns on the gas. Meanwhile, Lamar chances upon an underground passage where "Circle Jim" has taken refuge and a fight, Jim is killed. "The last of the Borden and the end of the Red Circle," says Lamar. But the next day he is astounded by the sight of a woman's hand outside a curio shop, showing the Red Circle on the white flesh. Lamar scribbles down the number on the license plate. June Travis, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, her nurse, discovers the theft.

THIRD INSTALLMENT

"TWENTY YEARS AGO"

"The Red Circle! God help us!" muttered the nurse once more, as June looked at her, dazed, incredulous.

"You know about the Red Circle? Won't you please tell me?" she entreated. "You must know, because I can see you recognize it. Don't you see how terrible it is for me? Mary, won't you tell me?"

The nurse's arm tightened around the slim young body. Unconsciously she lapsed into the soothing, automatic patting that she had used so often to put the baby June to sleep.

"I don't know, lamb. I don't know anything, precious," she stammered. Mary's face took on the haggardness of one who is awakened from what seemed to be a gruesome nightmare, only to find that it is a grim truth.

She turned from the kneeling figure and went quickly through the door and down the stairway, one hand pressed to her throat.

June looked after her, stunned by a swift, certain fear. Then, slowly she rose from her knees, walked over to her dressing table and sank into the little chair before the mirror.

In a moment she had decided. Humming softly, she ran down the steps and into the garden.

Down a side path, in a little clump of bushes was a stone bench. Sitting on this bench, swaying to and fro, with tightly clasped hands, was Mary.

June reached her side, breathless and alarmed. As she approached Mary looked up in piteous supplication.

"Don't ask me, precious! Don't ask me, dear! I don't know. I couldn't tell you, blessed," she moaned, and raised her hands to ward off June's embrace.

The girl sat down and put a loving arm across her shoulders.

"People who bring up children and love them," she began slowly, "always forget those children are grown. Once



"Get Yourself Together, Mumsie, Someone Is Coming."

a baby, always a baby, to loving mothers and dear, foolish old nurses. But I'm not a baby any more, Mary. Especially not since the horrible thing that happened today. I am branded—I am guilty of—guilty of—"

"Hush! Oh, darling, hush!" she besought. "They will hear you at the house. You mustn't say a word about it any more, not even to me—you mustn't think of it ever again. Promise."

"I can't promise anything," persisted June, fighting to regain her composure, "until you tell me, about this mark that has soiled my hand—tell me what you know of it."

"I'm afraid—I'm afraid," she repeated weakly.

"Tell me."

"Twenty years ago Mrs. Travis went

West on a trip with Mr. Travis, and the place we went to was a mining town where there was nothing but shacks and saloons and rough-looking men and half-dead looking women.

"At the end of the trip Mrs. Travis was pretty near spent. She oughtn't to have been traveling at such a time. But she just would insist on coming along. I remember Mr. Travis and me had to pretty near carry her into the place where we were going to stay while we were there. It wasn't a regular hotel—the sign said 'Gem Saloon. Also Rooms.' 'Jake' was the name of the man who kept it.

"Jake led the way up the stairs and Mr. Travis and me put our arms around poor Mrs. Travis and just lifted her up that rickety staircase into the bedroom on the second floor."

"And then we put her to bed," between us, Mr. Travis and me. He had to go down and speak to some men, on business. He had gone out West on some business about a gold mine he was interested in, you know. And the reason Mrs. Travis went along was because she was so sick and nervous, she said it would 'a' killed her to stay behind. And then, that afternoon, Mr. Travis and most all the men in the town went into the mountains to see a new gold claim.

They were the roughest looking lot, an' there was one a big, powerful fellow, a gambler—'Jim Borden' they called him."

"'Jim Borden!' cried June. "Why—I!" "And he was rougher even than the rest of 'em; but they all minded what he said. They went off riding on horses and mules with packs and guns slung on their backs and I remember I lifted Mrs. Travis out of bed and into a rickety, old rocking chair near the window so's she could wave her hand good-by and throw a kiss to Mr. Travis.

"That night her little baby was born. I was all alone there and it went awful with her—I thought she was dying. After a little while I called Jake and I told him about the baby. He said it was fine and he'd send one of the boys out to the mine to Mr. Travis with a note and tell him about the good news.

"Then, just as he was going down the stairs again he turned around and said he'd have to make it a double note; because Jim Borden's wife had just had a baby an hour before and Jim would want to know, too.

"Jake sent the note. Oh, the night was long! Mrs. Travis was unconscious. And every minute of the time when I wasn't trying to bring her to, I walked the floor with this mite of a baby of hers trying to save them both.

"The next morning early, it seems, outlaws outside the town heard that a big shipment of gold was in the roadhouse waiting to go out. They knew most of the men was away at the mines, so they attacked the place. I'll never forget the minute I heard the first firing. Short and sharp—mostly revolver shots.

"I could hear the women and children herding in, in the barroom downstairs. I could hear 'em calling, frightened, for their husband that wasn't there. Then I heard the doors slamming and the bolts shot into place. And in the midst of it all the door of the bedroom flung open and Joe and Jake came in dragging a sick woman between 'em.

"This is Jim Borden's wife," says Jake to me 'and here's Mrs. Toole carrying Jim's baby—you an' her'll take care of the two sick women and the babies, won't you? And we said 'yes'.

"Mrs. Toole put Jim's baby down on the bed next to Mrs. Travis—it was one of them narrow, no 'count beds—and went to fussing over Mrs. Borden. And I just walked the floor with the other baby and prayed. The fight was awful! Every now and again some woman downstairs would scream and a child would cry for its father.

"The shooting lasted all morning—our men were getting near the end of their bullets and their strength; and 'Slim Bob,' the head of the outlaws, was firing at the saloon door—that near he was—when he heard a shot from a different direction and we saw 'Slim Bob' duck and dodge away, slinking alongside a high wood fence; and at the same time one of the three men that was carrying a big timber that they were going to use to batter in the saloon door, dropped dead in his tracks!

"Away off in the road at the edge of the town we saw galloping horses, and then men scrambling off horses' backs and running toward us. They were the men back from the mines! They fired as they ran and the outlaws turned tail, trying to escape—all except a few—'Slim Bob' was one of 'em. I saw Mr. Travis make for him and then I made up my mind I'd go downstairs and call Mr. Travis to come straight up to his poor, unconscious wife.

"On the table was Mrs. Travis' open grip, just as I'd left it when the baby was born. It had a lot of soft, white, woolly things in it. So I laid the baby

on them when I ran downstairs—it was safer than the bed. It was safer than the bed—I thought it was safer than the bed," she repeated incoherently.

"Mary—Mary!" June shook her slightly. "Don't forget any of it now—you mustn't, do you hear? You mustn't! You left off where you went downstairs."

"And when I was going out of the room," continued the old woman, talking as if she were in a trance, "Mrs. Borden must 'a' heard her Jim's voice downstairs, 'cause she kinda tried to pull up out of the chair and then when I was halfway down the steps I heard a shot and something falling.

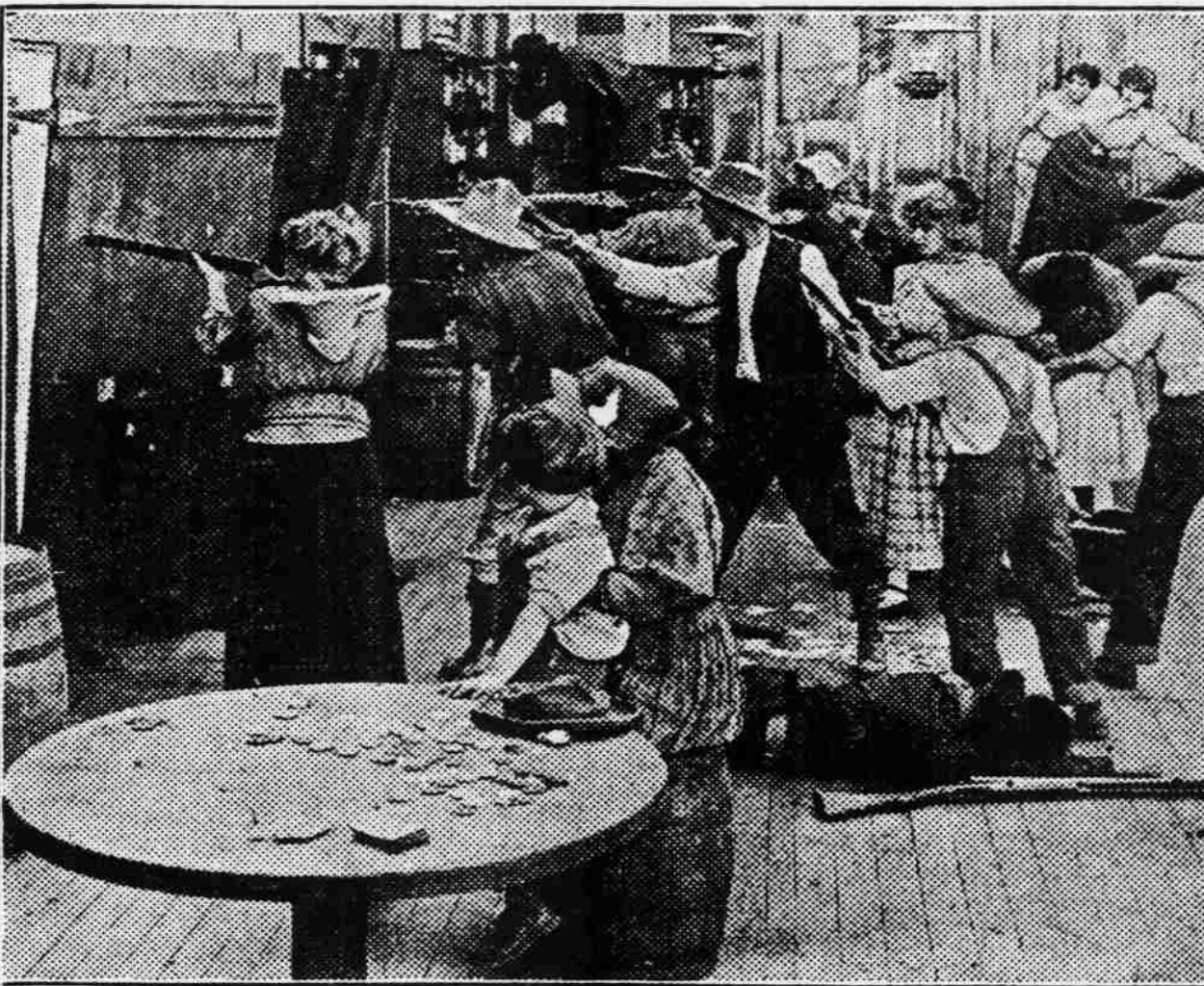
"Downstairs, in the barroom it was all shouting men, with women crying on their shoulders and little children hanging frightened to their mothers. And I heard big Jim Borden asking Jake about his missus and then jumping up the steps three at a time with a look like the smile of heaven on his stone-cut face.

"But in all the crowd I couldn't see Mr. Travis and I began to be afraid, thinking of that woman who loved him so, laying unconscious in bed upstairs—and the baby. So, when no one was looking, I ran out on the street—and there I found him—Mr. Travis—shot through the heart!

"I remember while I was there I heard someone come out, heavy, on the porch of the roadhouse and kind of stagger across the road. He must 'a' passed close, because it seemed to me I heard the weak, little wail of a newborn child. But I didn't notice much, just then.

"I just wandered back into the saloon like I was in a nightmare and stumbled up the steps, falling over my skirts and picking myself up; until I got into the bedroom. There, in the middle of the room, hanging over the table, with her eyes glassy staring and her chin dropped, was Jim Borden's wife—dead! Over in the bed laid Mrs. Travis, still unconscious, with a baby beside her.

"It was hours before I got the strength to get up from the chair again. It was only when I remembered how queer it was that the baby in the grip didn't cry that I jumped up sudden and went to get it. It was gone! The grip was empty. There was nothing but the dent its little body had made in the soft, woolly things—and



"The Fight Was Awful!"

over on the bed was the other one—Jim Borden's—a girl it was, and ours had been a boy."

Her voice broke off with a sudden dry gurgle in her throat. As June shrank away from her, a dawning horror in her eyes, she stretched out two worn, trembling hands in an effort to draw the girl back.

"You see, it must have been like this: Jim Borden had leaped into that room with his heart all bursting with love and pride, and he found his wife dead before him, lying near the baby in the grip, and looking over he saw the other woman on the bed with her baby beside her. He took the baby he thought was his own and went away—where, no one knew—and I never found out—till too late."

For a moment there was a silence, more compelling than sound. Suddenly, flinging her arms wide, June cried hysterically:

"What does it mean? Don't stop there. Go on! Go on! What are you trying to make me believe?"

"I did as I thought best at the time," Mary went on tonelessly, weary in heart and body from the purgatory ordeal. "Mr. Travis was dead. When Mrs. Travis came to, what could I tell her? A baby was there. No one but me knew it wasn't hers. It would 'a' killed her to tell her. I never told. She didn't know—she doesn't know—no one knows."

"And I—I am—" June gasped out the words.

Mary looked steadily into her terrified eyes and gripped her hands firmly.

"On the back of Jim Borden's right hand," she said heavily, "there was a queer Red Circle—they called him 'Circle Jim' out there. Just, as later, they—"

"No! No! I don't believe it—I'm not—I'm not—" June crumpled into a sobbing heap at Mary's feet.

Very gently the old woman lifted her and held her close:

"You are Jim Borden's daughter!" she declared with a solemnity that brooked no dispute. "Marked with the crime curse. But we must guard the secret. She must never know."

"We're going to keep the secret, aren't we, lamb?" Mary was saying,

"Nobody knows—nobody will ever need to know. And then—"

"Look!" June broke in with great agitation. "That man standing on the walk, staring up at the house!"

"Who is he?" asked the nurse quickly, alarmed at the girl's trepidation.

"It's Max Lamar—the crime specialist!"

"A detective! Oh, my precious—a detective!"

"No," June's lips curled slightly. "not a detective, Mary—a crime specialist—there is a great difference between the two, you know. He says so, himself."

"There ain't any difference, lamb,

when they're after you! And it's you he's after—he's found out—he's found you out!"

"Hush!" June commanded, placing her hand over the old woman's mouth. "He couldn't have found out—he's coming to see me. I asked him to the other day, at the prison. We're imagining things, you and I—both of us—and it isn't good to do that. Come with me."

Seizing her hand June dragged her over the lawn toward the side porch. In spite of her attempted bravado she felt trapped.

"Get yourself together, mumsie," Mary heard June say, gayly, "someone is coming to see us—to see me," she emphasized. "Do you remember Mr. Lamar—the crime specialist that we met at the prison? He's coming up the walk now. Will you tell him I'll be down in a minute."

Pulling at the fastenings of her morning dress she hurried to her boudoir. She would put on something fetching—and arrange her hair differently. A hundred ways and means of fascinating and hoodwinking this very calm and assured young man crowded into her brain.

Standing at the door of her room was Mary, her eyes wide with fear.

"You mustn't go down, darling," she urged nervously.

"You dear old fool!" June answered lightly, "come in and help me dress. Get me a pretty dress. The brown one, I think. And, Mary dear, make me fascinating enough to addle the head of even a crime specialist."

She leaned forward and pressed her laughing face close to the mirror of her dressing table. A little, blown wisp of hair tumbled into her eyes. Impatiently, she brushed it back then

day or thrills, suspense—tragedy. Will you tell me something of criminals as you know them? I've tried to study them just a little and—"

There was a smothered exclamation; it was in another sound that came from the stairway. June looked up just in time to see a portion of a black shirt move from the hall out on to the porch. Then followed a low-toned order in Mary's voice—the words "broken" and "vase" drifted in through the open window. By a lengthened shadow and a reflection in the window pane June saw that the nurse was standing, hidden, just outside the sill.

It amused the girl. It reminded her of a lioness standing over cub when the hunter drew near. But this man Lamar was so mild, so perfectly harmless—doubtless he was a sleuth of great reputation, but under this roof he was merely a courteous man of the world, who called because he was interested in her.

"I'll raise the ante," Lamar broke in on her musings—then caught himself, "I beg your pardon, Miss Travis. I have no reason to believe that you are familiar with poker terms. I meant that I'd bid one hundred times the orthodox amount of one cent if you'll tell me what your thoughts were just then. Whatever they were, they were indulgent, cynical and amusing; because your eyes mirrored each one of those moods."

June managed a mock-serious shudder.

"You appall me, Mr. Lamar," she answered laughingly, "I was thinking just then of the number of criminals you must have met."

"All kinds; and many of each kind," he started gravely. "And, if you really don't mind talking of such things, I'd like to ask you something. Before we met yesterday in the park, Miss Travis, did you see anything of a veiled woman in black?"

Outside, on the porch, a chair scraped along the floor. June heard the sharp intake of Mary's breath.

"I believe I did pass such a woman," she brought out the words slowly, as if unwilling to make the statement positive. "Yes, now that I think about it, I'm sure I did."

Lamar leaned forward in his chair and half-unconsciously placed a hand upon her arm.

"Think, Miss Travis—think!" he urged.

Down the stairs came the sleek, patter of Japanese feet in American shoes. Lamar turned, impatiently, as Yama advanced to the center of the room balancing a dustpan and brush in one lean, yellow palm—the other extended with a bit of charred paper fluttering stiffly, from it.

"Pardon. May this be honorable value to Miss June?" he intoned flatly.

Lamar started, at sight of the fragment. June reached out vaguely, nodded, smiled as best she could and took the paper from the butler's hand.

"Thank you. Yes. You may go." With Lamar's eyes upon her it was an effort to say even that.

As Yama disappeared through the doorway, Lamar turned upon her.

"What is that?" he said sharply.

"This?" she inquired faintly, holding the paper before her.

"Yes. What is it?"

Without waiting for her answer and before she had a chance to regain her shattered composure, he took the burned document from her hand and examined it carefully.

"Where did you get it?" he asked at length and his tone implied that conviction had taken place of suspicion.

"Why—er—why, the veiled woman in black dropped that note as she hurried by me."

Lamar walked up close to her and looked steadily into her wavering eyes. "Miss Travis," he said gravely, "are you quite sure of that?"

"Sure? Of course I'm sure!" she was trying desperately to laugh.

"Would you mind showing me just where you saw this woman in black?"

June laughed easily.

"Why, of course, I won't mind, Mr. Lamar. You're making this trifling incident such a frightfully serious affair, that it rather amuses me. Do detectives—I beg your pardon—do crime specialists always have to fasten on such silly things to track their criminals?"

Lamar ignored the sarcasm.

"You will come?" he repeated.

"I'll be ready to go out with you, in two minutes," she promised, running lightly up the stairs.

A black figure moved quickly across the porch and entered at a small side door. Lamar darted to the window too late to see more than its shadow.

Upstairs, in the boudoir, June dragged a hat from its box and stood before the mirror swinging it on her hand. There was a curious buzzing sound in her ears and things didn't look sharp and clear cut to her eyes.

As she turned to leave the room, Mary, breathless and shaking with terror, hurried through the door and threw her arms about her.

"You shan't go!" she declared passionately. "My precious, my lamb—you shan't be led to the slaughter. He suspected you. He has from the first. He came to spy, not to visit you. Don't go, dearie—don't go!"

"I have brought it on myself," June answered dully. "I've got to go. With his suspicion aroused, don't you see it's the only thing left to do? I'll be able to turn his suspicion aside—I don't know how—but I'll do it. Oh, I'm so tired!"

Just for a moment she weakened and placed her head on Mary's shoulder. She had always felt secure that way—as far back as her memory went. Even now, a woman grown, she found a strange sense of solace, resting there.

A stifled exclamation from the nurse

broke into her dream of rest. Startled she raised her head.

She saw a black sleeve, tightly gripped by a white hand in which a vivid circle of blazing red had suddenly been reborn. Horrified, she traced the flaming mark with a trembling forefinger.

Then the tension snapped and she sank to the floor, a whimpering helpless girl, with both hands pressed to her lips to muffle her frightened sobbing.

Abruptly June got to her feet, and tenderly lifted the old woman up beside her.

"You're going to be good and do just as I tell you," she commanded, "be-



"Did You See Anything of a Veiled Woman in Black?"

cause that is the only way you can help me. And I need help so, dear."

And in less than a minute she had gone, her face wreathed in smiles, waving a gay good-by with the gloves she was drawing on.

At the foot of the stairs Lamar was waiting for her. His manner was now a trifle overcautious.

Upstairs at the window of the girl's sitting room, Mary stood behind the draperies, motionless, and watched them go.

"God, he suspects her! There is danger for my little girl. God, tell me what to do! God—hear me in my trouble—tell me what to do!"

From far down the street the echo of June's merry laugh came back to her as she prayed in agony.

"You will remember precisely where she passed you?" Lamar was saying, suavely. "You see, ordinarily, it is enough to remember just about where a thing happened. But when you're tracking criminals it must be exactly where."

"If you become any more professional and technical I shall get so mixed up I won't remember anything," June warned him, jokingly. "I'm all shivery, right now! I'm thinking it great fun to be a sleuth."

"Really?" observed Lamar eyeing her keenly. "I trust you will continue to find it 'great fun,' Miss Travis."

"Here!" cried June mock-dramatically, "right, on this spot is where I should say passed the veiled woman in black—that is, where she passed me, I mean."

She was pointing a tragic forefinger a small spot in the flagging. Then suddenly a startled cry burst from her and she raised her arm limply—and pointed.

Turning, the detective saw a woman in black—a long coat hid her figure, a thick veil shrouded her features. She stood motionless on the walk, in front of a huge tree.

Incredulous, Max looked from the sable-draped figure to the half-fainting girl beside him—then back again. The woman hadn't moved. She seemed unconscious of their presence.

"Is that the one?" he muttered hoarsely. "Is that the woman who passed you?"

Stunned by the horror of it all, June nodded her head. Immediately Lamar left her side and started to stroll aimlessly toward the woman in black.

The sound of his steps on the pavement roused the veiled woman from her lethargy. She turned her head with a quick, startled movement and walked rapidly away.

Lamar quickened his pace. June, fearful of what she had done, started after him. Suddenly the woman in black, cut across a lawn, breaking into a run.

June saw the crime specialist clench his fist fiercely. His quarry had given him the slip. The girl found a wonderful exhilaration in the fact.

As she watched him his chin suddenly shot forward—his eyes strained from their sockets, and a smile, cruel yet suave, dawned around his mouth.

At the rear of the house stood a garage. Across its freshly painted, light gray door sprawled a blotch of inky black, plastered there by the wind.

The breeze died. The black patch fluttered and fell, hanging in limp folds. With three bounds Lamar had reached the garage door and was pulling at the soft cloth. He strained at the door, thinking it would give under the pressure. But it was locked.

When Lamar turned to June great beads of sweat stood on his forehead and rolled from his temples.

"At last!" he said exultantly, "I have the veiled woman this time, and perhaps—the mystery of the Red Circle!"

June stared at the edge of the black cloak that he gripped so tightly. She recognized it. It was—her own!

Inside the garage, flat against the door (imprisoned by the cloak edge she could not tear free) the woman in black pushed the veil back from her gray-white face and prayed:

"God keep my lamb from harm!"

(END OF THIRD INSTALLMENT.)

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

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SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, who derives his quoted name from a red birthmark on the back of his right hand, is released from prison after serving his third term. One member of every generation of the Borden family has been branded with the Red Circle birthmark and that member has always been a criminal. Jim and his wayward son Ted are the only known living of the Borden kin. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on "Circle Jim." June Travis and her mother, of the wealthy set interested in the reform of ex-convicts, meet Borden as he is released. "Circle Jim," realizing that his family is a menace to society, enters the bedroom where Ted is sleeping and turns on the gas. Lamar chances upon "Circle Jim" and Jim is killed. The last of the Borden, says Lamar. But the next day he sees the Red Circle on the back of a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June Travis, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Grant employs Lamar. Mary, June's nurse, discovers June's theft and the Red Circle on her hand, and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary, to turn away suspicion from June, dresses as the veiled woman and is pursued by Lamar.

FOURTH INSTALLMENT IN STRANGE ATTIRE

Max Lamar, gripping with both hands the corner of the black coat that protruded from the locked garage door, drove his shoulder full against the door panel, again and again. But the wood held firm.

"It seems to be a deadlock," laughed June, forcing her merriment with a mighty effort.

"Miss Travis," broke in Lamar, "will you help me? I can't let go here. Will you hurry around to the front door of the house this garage belongs to, and explain matters? Then ask leave for me to break the door down. I can do it if you'll hold the coat corner for me."

"Shan't I hold it now?" suggested June, an idea flashing into her farsighted mind. "I'll hold the coat while you try to smash the lock."

"I don't like to batter down people's property," he answered, "even in the name of the law—without asking their permission."

"But—"

"Besides," he added, "this Veiled Woman is strong. Whenever she tugs at her coat, it's all I can do to hold my corner of it. She might wrench it out of your hands."

"Yes," agreed June, under her breath, "that's exactly what I mean her to do."

But she forebore to say it aloud. And after a second look at Lamar's set jaw, she meekly turned away toward the house.

Mary, on the inner side of the garage door, had listened, panting, to

gloom, Mary groped her way. She found the opposite wall, and felt along its all but unseen surface. At the farthest corner, her numbed fingers touched what they sought—the lintel of a door.

It was the garage's little back door, giving on the alley, behind the grounds. For one suicidal moment, she thought this back door was locked. But it was only stuck from long disuse. She threw her whole fragile weight against the dirt-crusted portal. A shower of dust and spiders' webs cascaded down upon her head. But the door quivered at the impact.

She heard voices—one of them Lamar's. And again she cast herself against the door. This time it flew wide; with a whining of hinges and a clatter of falling debris; and the rush of her onset drove her half way across the alley, outside.

Darting back to close the door behind her, the old woman cast a fearful look up and down the alley. The coast was clear. Incontinently Mary took to her heels.

Max Lamar clung doggedly to the coat corner that protruded from the garage's front door. He heard muffled noises from within. But they were so faint and the door was so thick, that he could not classify them. Nor, indeed, had he time to. For, presently, June reappeared around the corner of the big house. With her were a hatless and rather annoyed-looking woman in a morning gown and a highly interested butler.

"Madam, I am very sorry to disturb you like this. But we have chased a thief into your garage, as Miss Travis has probably explained to you. I have hold of this corner of the fugitive's coat, as you see. Will you let me break the lock of your garage door and get in? Of course, I'll pay—"

"If I may suggest," said the woman in frigid politeness, "it might be better to go into the garage by the back door, before breaking my locks. Had that occurred to you, Mr. Detective?"

"If I let go of this coat—Miss Travis, will you hold the coat corner for me while I go around to investigate? Please!"

"Why, yes," quaveringly assented June, taking hold of the cloth, alongside Lamar's own grip. "I'll do my best. I'm pretty strong."

As he disappeared, June pressed her face close against the door.

"Mary!" she whispered eagerly; and "Mary! Mary!"

No answer. Then in a moment, the sound of a key in the lock. The door swung open. The woman of the house stood in the garage threshold. June found herself holding the corner of the empty coat.

"She—she is gone?" stammered June, her temples pulsing and buzzing with swift relief.

"Yes," snapped the woman, "she got out of the coat and then out of the back door. Your detective friend is exploring the alley for her. I'm going to watch him pick up clues. It is quite amusing. Almost as amusing as Field day at a lunatic asylum."

A new terror beset June: the coat that she still held, was a menace. She began to realize this: Lamar would assuredly seize upon it as a clue. From the maker's name, he could in time trace its ownership to her.

She turned the coat over, exposing the label. With a jerk she tore it away and thrust it into the front of her dress.

She heard Lamar returning, and she carelessly dropped the coat across the sill of the open door.

"Well?" queried June, interestedly, as Max came in sight around the corner of the garage. "What news of the Veiled Woman?"

"Got clean away," he reported, sulkily. "No trace of her."

He caught sight of the coat lying where June had dropped it. His look of chagrin brightened to one of keen eagerness. He snatched the coat from the greasy floor and twisted around so as to bring the inside of the neckband into view. And again his face darkened.

"Clever woman!" he muttered. "Even the tailor's label is gone. Well, there's only one thing left to do. I'll take this coat to police headquarters and have Allen send a man around with it to every tailor in the city. One of them is bound to recognize it. And we'll catch our woman that way, before another day's ended."

They left the grounds and gained the sidewalk.

"I want to thank you ever so much, Miss Travis," he said, "for being such a brick; and helping me as you have, today. But for your showing me where you had seen the Veiled Woman, I should never have gotten on her track. It was splendid of you."

"It wasn't," she contradicted, "I was glad to be of any help. When I was hanging on to that ridiculous coat-corner, like grim death, I felt quite a heroine. But—"

"There's another thing," he said, hesitatingly. "A thing I hate like blue poison to say; but it's got to be said. Will you try to forgive me, in advance?"

"How ominous!" she laughed. "What is it?"

"When that Jap butler of yours showed you the torn note, an hour ago," said Max, uncomfortably, "do you know what I thought? I thought you were the Veiled Woman."

"Mr. Lamar!" cried June, her sweet voice vibrant with amazed reproach. "Won't you forgive me?" he pleaded.

"What was I to think? It all seemed to fit in, with such horrible exactness. How else could I account for part of the stolen note being found in your room? And your explanation seemed so lame—so unconvincing. The simple truth often does, you know. Won't you forgive me, please?"

"You—you doubted my word?" murmured June, incredulously. "You actually thought that I could—?"

"I'm so ashamed!" he broke in. "But I paid for my mistake. I never was more hideously miserable in all my life than I was at that very moment. Nothing could make me suspect you again," he concluded vehemently.

The moment she was in her own room the lightness of manner fell from her, like an ill-fitting garment. Her face was suddenly drawn and haggard.

Gradually the Red Circle crept into sight on the back of her white hand. "Nothing can stop him," she repeated. "Nothing can save me—except myself!"

Taking her room telephone from the desk, she ordered her limousine brought from the garage.

Ten minutes later June Travis entered a men's outfitter's shop of the cheaper sort, on a downtown street. To the very admiring clerk who strutted forth from the back of the store to welcome her, she said:

"My brother is to leave the hospital today. He is recovering from smallpox—Don't be frightened. I haven't been near him—He has just telephoned me that they destroyed all his clothes, to prevent infection. And he wants me to buy him a new outfit."

Lamar, meantime, swept like a whirlwind into the private office of Chief of Police Allen.

"Got her!" he announced. "At least I've got hold of one end of the chain"

and she's clamped fast to the other end. Here's her coat. The Veiled Woman's big black coat. I'll tell you later how I got it. Can't some of your born idiots chase around to all the tailor shops in a rush and find who it was made for? If they find that they'll find the Veiled Woman. And then the Red Circle will stop being a mystery; and maybe I can blow myself to a decent night's sleep."

The chief looked at his watch. "Inside of half an hour," he said, "every first-class store and tailor shop in town will be shut for the night. And this coat came from a first-class place. Anyone can see that. We'll have to wait till tomorrow morning. Here," to his secretary. "Tell the detective department to get busy on that tomorrow. First thing. Handle it carefully. It's all gasoline and grease. Now, then, Max, my boy, let's hear the story."

June, coming out from the men's outfitting shop, carried a big and awkward bundle that she had refused to allow the obsequious clerk to send home for her. Her next visit was to a theatrical wigmaker. A few minutes later she emerged, with a second and smaller package, got into the limousine and went home.

June went straight to her bedroom and dropped the parcels on a chair. Thence she went into her sitting room—to find Mary waiting for her.

At sight of the loyal old woman the girl rushed up to her and caught Mary close to her breast.

"You dear!" she exclaimed, in tearful gratitude. "You dear! You splendid old dear! It was wonderful of you! Wonderful! Oh, there aren't any words to thank you! I never

dreamed it was you, until I saw that miserable coat stuck in the garage door. Why, you might have been arrested and all sorts of terrible things!"

"There, there!" soothed Mary. "It's all right! It's all right, honey! I'd do a million times more'n that for my little girl, any day in the whole year. Just you forget all about what I did. It's what I'm here for."

"Forget it?" cried June. "Never as long as I live! Oh, Mary, you were so—"

The girl's eyes narrowed. The back of her right hand began to throb.

"I'm so tired!" she murmured, "and I'm so faint, with all this fright and danger. It's given me a sick headache. I'm going to bed. Tell mother, won't you? And say I don't want any dinner sent up to me. I want to go to sleep and not be disturbed till tomorrow morning."

Chief Allen still sat in his private office, clearing up some odds and ends of the day's official routine, before going to his club for a belated dinner. Night had fallen, but a broad streak of moonlight lay athwart the window sill.

His secretary came in from the outer office.

"Young fellow outside there, chief," he announced. "Wants to see you. He's a dummy. Not deaf; but he's dumb. Here's a note he scribbled for you. He's from Mr. Lamar."

The chief took the slip of paper his secretary tendered, and read the three written lines it contained:

I am dumb. Cannot talk. But I can hear. I must see the chief of police. Mr. Lamar sent me.

"Oh, all right. All right," grunted the chief. "I suppose I'll get my dinner some time between now and Christmas, if I have luck. Bring him in."

The secretary vanished, reappearing in a moment with a young man in tow.

The visitor was quietly dressed and wore on his head a golf cap, which it evidently did not occur to him to remove in the august presence of the chief. He also carried under one arm a crook-handled Malacca cane.

Unbidden, the caller seated himself gracefully in a chair beside the chief's desk and drew from his pocket a little scratchpad and a pencil. With-

back here and deposit it with Humanson in the detective bureau."

For seven or eight blocks, after she left police headquarters June Travis hurried on, from street to street, Policeman Meeks ever close at her side. The officer's eyes never for an instant left the coat that hung over his companion's arm.

The girl was in despair. She had planned so cleverly this kidnapping of the coat!

She was helpless, despairing. And with the blind instinct of the despairing, she unconsciously turned her steps homeward.

"Where does this cutter of yours live, anyhow, Dummy?" the policeman was asking.

June paused, uncertainly. This farce could not go on much longer. Meeks was beginning to grow suspicious.

A quarter block ahead, the boulevard split into a "Y." At the left it continued at its present level. At the right ran a flight of forty marble steps, leading downward to a terraced avenue one tier below the boulevard on the city's hillside.

And then, as ever of late in her moments of direst need, an inspiration came to the girl.

Once more she took up her former brisk stride; the grumbling Meeks close behind her. As they came to the fork of the boulevard, she halted again.

"Well," growled Meeks, "which way, now?"

She pointed down the long flight of marble steps, snowy in the vivid moonlight. The man hesitated. She glanced at him and saw the reason. His eyes were fixed in stupid wonder at the right hand with which she was pointing. On the surface of the hand gleamed the Red Circle; mercilessly distinct in the clear light.

June caught the policeman roughly by the arm with her other hand, pointed again toward the terrace beneath them, and started down the steps at a run.

Fearful of losing sight of the precious coat, the policeman also broke into a lumbering run, protesting:

"Hey! Go easy there! What's your hurry? Want me to break my neck?"

Even as he spoke, June planted her feet firmly on one broad step and came to an abrupt standstill. Meeks could not check his own speed as suddenly. So he lunged ahead a step or two.

As he lumbered past her, the girl deftly swung her stick, holding it by the ferule end. The crook handle caught Policeman Meeks neatly around the left ankle.

At the same instant, June braced herself, and jerked backward with the stick.

Policeman Meeks' body smote the stairway about six steps farther down; bounded in air; missed a step or two; then struck the stairway again and proceeded to roll rapidly down the remaining twenty-four steps.

For a bare half-second, the patrolman lay half-stunned and breathless. Then he scrambled groaningly to his feet, sore all over.

"Gone!" croaked Policeman Meeks, still catching his breath with difficulty. "Gone!"

It was Yama's custom, on moonlit nights, to take his Japanese flute from his tin trunk in the storeroom and to fare forth into the farthest reaches of the Travis garden; there to lean pensively against a tree in the midst of a clump of shrubs, and his eyes on the moon, to play sentimental and hideous Japanese melodies to it.

Tonight, Yama was tooting away right dreamfully, when the sound of crackling bushes broke in upon his music.

He stepped out of the shrubbery clump to investigate. Then, the flute fell from his nerveless fingers and he stared goggle-eyed.

Across a patch of lawn a figure was running; its feet soundless on the turf. The figure reached the house. It paused, at the bottom of a vine trellis; then skillfully began to climb the trellis.

It reached a second-story balcony; stepped over the railing and began to fumble with the long French windows of a room. The windows opened and the figure glided into the room; softly closing the windows behind it.

The spell was broken. With a yell of alarm, Yama grabbed up his fallen flute and dashed for the house. A second or so later burst unceremoniously into the library where Mrs. Travis and Mary were sitting.

"Scuse!" he sputtered. "Scuse, please! But man climb up to honor-able Miss June's room!"

The women flew upstairs. Yama, prudently arming himself with a large poker, followed.

When he reached the second floor Mrs. Travis was already hammering frantically at the locked outer door of June's suite.

"What is it?" called a drowsy voice from inside.

"Quick!" called Mary. "Let us in, dearie! There's a man—"

"In a minute," yawned June's voice from the bedroom; "I can't find the light."

The girl, never pausing for an instant, was hurling her manly attire into a closet, garment by garment, as she replied. She tore off her wig, shook down her hair, flung a negligee wrapper around her, rumpled the pillows and threw back the coverings of her bed, and presently appeared, sleepily blinking, in the doorway.

"My dear! My dear!" shrieked Mrs. Travis. "Come out quickly. There's a burglar in your room."

"A burglar?" repeated June, sleepily cross. "How silly! There can't be."

"Who saw this wonderful burglar?" she asked, as they finished poking be-

hind the portieres of the sitting room. "Yama saw him," said Mrs. Travis.

"Or he thought he did."

"Oh!" laughed June. "Yama, eh? I might have known it. This is the fourth burglar in six months that Yama has discovered, and that nobody but Yama was able to see. And he has waked us with no less than three fireless fire scares."

"But," insisted Yama, "I did saw him. He climbed the trellis to bedroom window there an—"

"That bedroom window leading out on the balcony is locked from the inside," reported Mrs. Travis. "I tried the fastenings myself, just now. Yama, if you give us any more foolish scares like this—"

"And please," begged June, "if the burglar ghost is quite exploded, won't you all run away and let me get back



The Back of Her Hand Began to Throb.

to bed? My head aches frightfully. It was all right when you waked me up. Now it's starting in again. Good night," she went on, kissing Mrs. Travis and then Mary. "I'm so sorry you two old dears were frightened. Yama seems to be giving us rather more than our share of the yellow peril lately."

But she carefully avoided Mary's questioning eyes as she spoke.

Chief Allen's delayed dinner was destined to still further postponement. As he sauntered into his club and headed for the dining room, the first person he chanced to see was Max Lamar.

"Look here, old man," the chief hailed him in mock rage. "If I starve to death it'll be your fault. What the deuce do you mean by sending that Noiseless Tailor to see me just when I'm starting out to feed?"

"What Noiseless Tailor?" asked Lamar, mystified. "A tailor's dummy?"

"No, a dummy tailor. The one you sent to look at that Veiled Woman coat. The young fellow who says his name's Attman or something like that. He blew in on me just as I was getting ready to—"

"Who blew in on you?" demanded Lamar. "I haven't sent anyone to see you today."

"Your mind's softening at the edges," accused the chief. "I'm speaking of that ladies' tailor who came from you, ten minutes ago, to get the coat—"

"I tell you," reiterated Lamar, "I don't know what you're talking about. I haven't even seen any ladies' tailor—"

"Good Lord!" groaned the chief, in sudden consternation. "Sold out! He's got the coat and—say! Come back to headquarters with me, on the run, Lamar."

They bolted from the club, jumped into a taxicab at the door and set out at top speed for police headquarters. In a dozen sentences, as they rode, Chief Allen outlined the story of June's visit. As he finished his frown cleared away.

"We're getting all het up over nothing at all," he said. "I forgot; Meeks is with him. I told him to keep his eyes on the coat."

The taxi stopped in front of police headquarters. As the two men got out they saw a disheveled form limp up the steps just ahead of them.

"Meeks!" yelled the chief.

Policeman Meeks tried to salute, jauntily. But the effort was a ghastly failure.

"The coat!" thundered the chief as he dragged Meeks into his private office; Lamar followed close behind them, and shut the door. "The coat! Where is it? And where's the crook you were told to keep watch on? Speak up! Where is he?"

"I don't know, chief," babbled Meeks, almost in tears; "he done me up. Rolled down a flight of steps and—"

"You ape!" snarled Chief Allen; "you blundering, cowardly bonehead! You let a man half your size do you up? You—"

"He tripped me," sniffed Meeks. "When I got up he had beat it."

"With the coat?" asked Lamar, fiercely.

"Yessir! 'Twasn't my fault. I—"

"I'll have you broke for this, you nincompoop!" stormed the chief. "Go clean away, did he? Coat and all. And not a clue to find him by?"

"Only one clue," coweringly assented Meeks, "and that don't amount to anything. I s'pose."

"What was it?"

"He—he had a big, red ring—a birthmark like—on the back of his right hand. I took notice of it when he—"

"The Red Circle!" bellowed the chief, his nerves at tangle, "The Red Circle—again!"

(END OF FOURTH INSTALLMENT.)



"Even the Tailor's Label Is Gone!"

the brief dialogue. As she heard June's light step receding on the driveway gravel, she threw all her strength into one last wrench at the recalcitrant coat.

The cloth was stout and Max Lamar's grasp unshakable. But the tug caused two of the coat's upper buttons to fly half way across the garage. One of Mary's lean shoulders slipped out of the garment. That gave the captive woman her inspiration.

In trembling haste, she unfastened the remaining buttons, freeing herself, she left the imprisoned coat to fall to the greasy floor of the garage—Max Lamar still gripping its corner, on the door's far side, with futile energy.

Across the greasy floor, through the

THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, who derives his quoted name from a red birthmark on the back of his right hand, is released from prison after serving his third term. One member of every generation of the Borden family has been branded with the Red Circle birthmark and that member has always been a criminal. Jim and his wayward son Ted are the only known living of the Borden kin. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on "Circle Jim." June Travis and her mother meet Borden as he is released. "Circle Jim" and Ted are killed. "The last of the Borden," says Lamar. But the next day he sees the Red Circle on the back of a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June Travis, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Grant employs Lamar. Mary, June's nurse, discovers June's theft and the Red Circle on her hand, and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary dresses as the veiled woman and is pursued by Lamar. She escapes, leaving her coat as a clue in his hands. June, disguised as a boy, recovers the coat from police headquarters.

FIFTH INSTALLMENT WEAPONS OF WAR

"I believe the Red Circle never shows on your hand except when you're planning some wicked mischief!" croaked old Mary, as she paused at the door of June's bedroom, early next morning, her arms piled high with clothes.

"Yes," said June, dreamily, with a guilty glance at her handbook. "I've thought so, too."

"It was there last evening. It isn't there this morning," went on the old woman, depositing the clothes on a chair and beginning to arrange them, one by one, in a wardrobe trunk. "What were you up to, dearie? Tell Mary."

"Nothing at all," declared June, her eyes fixed anxiously on the trunk Mary was packing. "Please don't let's talk about it. It makes me so miserable. I've packed part of the trunk," she added. "Don't disarrange that part of it, Mary."

Before breakfast, June had gone to Mrs. Travis; and, on plea of feeling "run down," had persuaded her to close the town house that very morning and to go for the season to their summer cottage at Surfton.

Max Lamar had been closeted for an hour with Chief of Police Allen. They had twisted the new development of the "Red Circle" mystery inside and out, studying it vainly from every imaginable angle.

First of all, they had ascertained—what they had already been sure of—that no tailor in city or state was named Attman; and that neither city nor state contained any master tailor who was a mute. Also, a vigilant search of every tailor shop, by a dozen detectives, had failed to identify any employer or employee with the dumb youth of the preceding night.

"Have you tried your pretty little portrait gallery?" asked Lamar.

"No. We'll run over it, if you like. I'd spot that lad's face anywhere."

With the help of his secretary and of Policeman Meeks—the only men

have reformed. Has small cobbler shop at 1019 Bright way. Height 5 feet 8 inches. Weight 240 pounds. Identifying marks—

"Smiling Sam Eagan!" broke off Lamar. "I'm not likely to forget him. We got him when we got 'Circle Jim'. But he was too slick for us to give him all he deserved. He was turned loose about a year ago, wasn't he? That was the first time I ever heard of Miss June Travis—the young lady we met in the park, you know, when we were looking for the Veiled Woman. I heard at the prison how she met Smiling Sam when he got out, and how she was fooled by his maudlin pledges of reform. He'd learned cobbler during his term. And she spent good money to set him up in a shoemaker shop of his own."

"She's the salt of the earth, that girl," commented the chief.

"Suppose I drop around to see Smiling Sam," said Lamar.

"Sam Eagan?" returned the chief, looking once more through a handful of photos. "Here you are: Cobbler shop at 1019 Bright way. I've had him watched once or twice. But there's nothing on him."

Sam Eagan's shop faced on a corner, and behind it was a disreputable looking back yard separated by a rickety gate and a tumbledown board fence from the alley at the rear.

The corner was uninviting, even for corner loafers. Yet one such loafer infested it at all hours of the day. This consistent idler was a thickest youth, clad in shabby gray. His name was Tom Dunn. His mission in life seemed to be to lean half-asleep against the lintel of Sam Eagan's doorway, puffing cigarettes.

It was an uninspiring life that Mr. Thomas Dunn led. Long since, the neighbors had ceased to interest themselves in him.

Had the neighbors looked closer, they might perhaps have noted that his half-shut eyes were as bright as a rat's, and that those same apparently drooping eyes were forever shifting their gaze up and down the street. Also, that Mr. Dunn at intervals would step back into Smiling Sam's shop.

Tom Dunn, this morning, lounged as usual, in front of Smiling Sam's shop; smoking an ill-made cigarette; and loafing away the early hours when most of the world was at work.

Inside the dingy little shop, Sam himself was up to his eyes in toil. The shop's dirty walls re-echoed to the quick taps of his hammer, as he drove tiny bright nails into tough sole leather.

As Eagan, cross-legged on his low bench, sat hammering gayly away, Tom Dunn ducked his unshaven visage into the room.

"Jake's comin'," announced Dunn; and returned to the front steps once more.

Smiling Sam looked up with a friendly nod, a moment later, as a cadaverous man of middle age shambled into the shop. The newcomer bore under his arm a crude little newspaper parcel. He handed it to Sam, without a word.

Eagan unrolled the newspaper wrappings. Out fell a dusty shoe, whose sole was all but gone and whose heel was "run" at the left side. Smiling Sam picked up a cobbler's knife and proceeded to pry off the battered shoe's still more battered heel, Jake standing in nervous expectancy behind him and looking avidly over the cobbler's fat shoulder.

Presently, the heel came away from the shoe. It was hollow, and it was wadded with tissue paper. Sam carefully undid the tissue folds. Out of them dropped a round brooch, set with alternate pearls and diamonds of a fair size.

"How much?" demanded Jake.

"Twenty," was Sam's terse verdict. "Twenty," snorted the indignant Jake. "Twenty what? Twenty not'n? Twenty dollars for that bit of Easy Street Pavement? Why, the gold settin' is worth more 'n that, you measly old gouger?"

"Twenty!" snapped Eagan. "Take it or leave it."

"I'll leave it, then," stormed Jake. "I'm not going to be robbed. Give it back to me."

"Sure," smiled Eagan, blandly, returning the brooch to him; and at the same time absentmindedly pulling from his trousers pocket a roll of bills which he fingered carelessly.

To Jake the sight of money was a bone to a starving dog. He wavered. Then—

"Oh, take it, you swine!" he growled, tossing the brooch down upon Eagan's leather-aproned lap. "Take it. I hope it lands you in the pen!"

Sam peeled two greasy ten-dollar bills from the roll, handed them to Jake and put the rest of the money back in his pocket. He picked up the brooch. As he did so, Tom Dunn slipped hurriedly into the shop.

"Max Lamar—fly cop—" he reported, "Comin' down the block; lookin' at the numbers on the houses."

"Gee!" babbled Jake. "He'll spot me, dead sure! He's—"

"Out the back way," ordered Sam.

The lookout caught the shaking Jake by the arm and hustled him toward the back of the shop; to a place where the blank surface of the wall was broken by several shelves on which stood a sparse array of shoe boxes.

Dunn thrust his hand in among these boxes. Instantly, a section of the wall—shelves and all—opened outward, revealing a passageway behind. Through this opening, Dunn shoved the panic-stricken Jake; closing the thick secret door behind them.

Jake and his conductor found themselves in a dim-lit inner room, unfurnished save for a big, and dog-eared calendar that hung on one wall, and a broken packing box below it. Dunn pushed violently at a slab in the chipped plaster of the adjacent wall. The plaster gave back at his push. A doorway, perhaps three feet high and twenty inches or less in width, took the place of the seemingly solid plaster. Through this hole, closing it behind them, the two wriggled; out into the yard beyond; and thence, through the rickety gate to the alleyway.

Meantime, left alone in his shop, Smiling Sam Eagan saw a long shadow fall athwart the street threshold and hesitate there for an instant.

No time was to be lost. Sam slipped the brooch back into the hollow of the shoe-heel; and, with two deft blows of the hammer, nailed the heel into place on its shoe.

He was driving the second nail, when Max Lamar sauntered into the shop.

Max glanced down approvingly at the busy old fellow tacking a worn heel on to a worthless shoe.

"Well, well, Mr. Lamar!" he cried jovially, holding out an enormous hand. "This is an honor I wasn't a-looking for. Sit down. You'll find that bench clean, I think. I try to

"Let me take that bum old shoe you're playing with, Mr. Lamar. It'll get you all dirty."

Thinking Sam was trying to change the subject in order to avoid talking of the Red Circle, Lamar paid no heed to his request; but kept on swinging the shoe idly to and fro, as he asked:

"That Red Circle, now—you remember what Jim Borden used to say about it."

"That it cropped out once in every generation of his family," supplemented Eagan, "and that the person who had it was always a criminal."

"I have reason to believe it was gospel truth, Eagan," said Lamar. "The Red Circle on the back of the hand has always been the sign-manual of a crook, in the Borden family. And—"

"Not always," corrected Sam. "There was that son of his—your Ted Borden—for instance. He was a cheap crook, right down to the ground, that youngster was. But there wasn't any Red Circle on his hand. That shoe, now—" he continued anxiously; but Max interrupted.

"That brings me to the point. You say Ted Borden had no Red Circle on his hand. And Ted died when his father died. But how about Jim Borden's other children?"

"Circle Jim's other children?" cried Sam, in a wonder that was palpably genuine. "His other children? Why, man alive, Jim Borden never had another child but Ted."

"I'll tell you why I ask," said Lamar, impressively, leaning forward and emphasizing his words by tapping the shoe against his knee. "Because I happen to know that no less than two people in this very city today have the Red Circle on the backs of their right hands."

He broke off and looked down with sudden curiosity at the shoe he was

miss," said Sam, with a fine show of courage, "but I can stand it. The doctor did it a lot of good last month; but he won't give me any more treatment, he says, till I pay the twenty-five dollars I owe him on his last bill. So I guess I'll have to grin and bear it awhile longer."

"You poor old thing," said June, in quick sympathy. "Indeed you shall not 'grin and bear it' another day. Here," taking three bills from her handbag, "pay that cranky bear of a doctor this very morning and have him give you treatment. Tell him to send his next bill to me. I must go now. My mother and Mary are waiting for me in the car, outside there. Good-by, Sam; good-by, Mr. Lamar."

But Max would not be dismissed in this fashion. He insisted on going to the car with her, and, on the way, he managed to angle successfully for an invitation to call on her at the Surfton cottage.

After which he stared at the automobile until it bore her out of sight. Then he wandered on down the street, planning busily—not for the solving of the Red Circle mystery, but to discover some way of arranging his work so as to leave him an entire afternoon and evening free for a run to Surfton-by-the-Sea.

Sam Eagan and the mysteriously rattling shoe were quite wiped from his mind.

Sam, meantime, his professionally genial smile glued to his red face, was looking down at the twenty-five dollars June had so generously forced upon him. But, though his eyes were fixed on the money in his hand, his mind was not.

Twenty-five dollars, just at present, seemed to Smiling Sam a pitifully small sum. For he had sudden visions of an infinitely larger amount. Visions so bright as to take away, for the moment, even the memory of his narrow escape from exposure in the matter of the hollow-heeled shoe. A mighty inspiration was gripping Sam Eagan; an inspiration born of his talk with Lamar.

After a moment of thought he nodded his head, stuck the money into his pocket and locked the door of his shop. Then he went to the secret door among the shoe-shelves and opened it. Passing into the hidden room he crossed to where the dog-eared old calendar hung on the wall.

Lifting this calendar, he disclosed a cupboard behind it. Reaching into this, he pulled forth a telephone, took the receiver from the hook and called for a number.

"Miss La Salle's apartment?" he asked presently; then: "That you, Alma?—Sam—Come around here in a rush. There's something big. Hurry up."

Eagan returned to the shop, put on his coat and went out into the neighborhood to do a little shopping.

Back home he came, and through to the hidden room; there depositing his purchases in the telephone cupboard behind the calendar. He had barely regained the front shop when a woman entered.

Alma La Salle was perhaps twenty-five, perhaps a little older. She was of medium height; wiry, dark and inclining to sallowness.

She was an invaluable source of revenue to Sam. And, apart from her uncanny deftness at robbery, he knew he could always count on her wit and daring to carry out any campaign he might devise.

"Hello, kid," was his greeting, this morning. "You didn't waste any time. That's right. You got a train to catch and some fancy packing to do, first."

"Train to catch?" she repeated eagerly.

"To Surfton-by-the-Sea. There's a big ball at the Surfton hotel tonight. Our man there tipped me to it. You're going to 'operate' at the ball."

"But—"

"It's a new angle we're going to work from, on this," he pursued. "There ought to be a pot of cash in it. Ever hear of the Red Circle?"

"Of course," she made answer. "Who hasn't?"

"Give me your hand," he ordered. "The right one."

Wonderingly, Alma obeyed. Moistening the brush and rubbing it on the red-paint cake, Sam proceeded to trace on the back of the woman's hand an irregular Red Circle.

"Watch that closely," he warned. "That's just the shape of the one Borden had. Do you think you could paint that on your own hand?"

"Why, yes; but—"

He dipped the sponge in the liquid from the phial and passed it over the circle. The paint quickly vanished.

"There you are!" said he. "Go to the ball. Pinch everything you get half a chance at. Then sneak into some quiet corner to paint that circle on your hand. Manage to let the house detective or some of the guests get a glimpse of it. Then rub it off. When the yell goes up that a lot of boobies have been robbed the Red Circle will be sure to get the blame for it."

There was but one theme of import among the summer idlers at Surfton-by-the-Sea. June had not been at the cottage an hour before she had heard the whole story from Mary, who had it from a neighbor.

It seemed that Todd Drew, the disolute young son of Amos Drew, the great inventor, had just arrived at the Surfton hotel. He had brought thither, so said report, a small flat metal case that was more deadly than fifty batteries of siege guns.

For this case contained the plans for a war-engine, infinitely ingenious and more murderous than any hitherto devised. It was a veritable monster of destruction, this engine. By its use

whole armies could be destroyed in a single minute.

Amos Drew had invented the thing. Having done so he had been so appalled by its possibilities for annihilation that he had never put it upon the market, but had stowed the plans away among his private papers.

But now Amos Drew was dead, and his only heir, Todd Drew, was busy wasting the paternal fortune.

Thus it was, seaside gossip ran, that he had brought to Surfton the terrible war-engine plans; and he was to meet here one Count Frell, the agent for a foreign government, to negotiate with him for their sale.

With a shudder June dismissed the story from her mind. To occupy her thoughts, she resolved to take the bun-



She Resolved to Toss the Bundle Into the Sea.

dle of masculine clothing at once to the nearest deserted pier and toss it into the sea.

Half way to the pier she passed a ramshackle boathouse, whose weather-warped boards were bulged and stuck, in several places, until they looked like the slats in front of a hen-house. As June sped past the boathouse she chanced to notice a large smooth stone—just the thing to weight the bundle she carried. She picked it up, opened the bundle at one end, dropped in the stone and fastened the package's string once more. At the same moment, from the shack just behind her, she heard a man's voice saying impatiently:

"I'm no blooming diplomat, count. Come down to cases. What will you pay?"

June dropped the bundle she held. She stood transfixed, there, on the rocky beach, in front of the shack. Understanding came to her with a rush. So the story was true!

June—the Red Circle blazing and pulsing on her white hand—had crept nearer and nearer to the shack. She peeped in, cautiously, through one of the wide cracks in the boards.

A crate had been turned upside down; to serve as a table, and it stood close to the aperture in the boards. At the opposite ends of this improvised table, on a couple of boat trestles, sat two men.

On the crate-table, just in front of Drew, rested an oblong metal dispatch box, perhaps ten inches long, four inches wide and two inches high.

June drew back from the shack and glanced guiltily around. No one was in sight. Near by lay a fragment of wreckage, a thick board about five feet long.

She carried it to the shack's only door, braced one end of the board against a boulder in front of the door and then put the other end just beneath the jutting cross-panel half way up the door.

"Yes, sir!" Todd Drew was vociferating. "It's worth an easy two million dollars to your government—or to any other warring country—to get these plans. They're—"

He broke off with a yell. For as he looked down at the metal box that had lain in front of him on the table it was no longer there. He was just in time to see a woman's small hand drawing the dispatch box cautiously out through a crack in the wall boards.

Drew made a clutch at the vanishing hand and seized it by the wrist.

"I've got her, count!" he cried. "Say, she struggles like a wildcat. Run outside and grab her."

The count leaped for the door. At the same instant June's other hand appeared through the adjoining crack. Its fingers grasped a long pin she had hastily snatched from her sailor hat.

Into Todd's detaining fist she drove the pin, right mercilessly.

With a howl of pain Drew relaxed his grip on her wrist. Her hands vanished—the dispatch box and the hat-pin along with them—just as the count bellowed:

"I cannot get this miserable door open! It is jammed!"

June waited to hear no more. She tore open the end of the bundle, thrust the metal box into it, closed it again and, snatching it up, raced fadly for the pier. Nor did she pause until she had hurled the bulky parcel far out into the sea.

Meantime, in the shack, pandemonium had broken loose. Both men threw their bodies frantically against the unyielding door.

As the door at last fell Todd drew the count rushed forth, panting, disheveled, in pursuit of the thief.

"It was a woman!" puffed Drew as he broke into a run. "Our only clue is that I saw the sleeve of a sailor suit and—and—there was a fiery Red Circle on the back of her hand!"

(END OF FIFTH INSTALLMENT.)



"Suppose I Drop Around to See Smiling Sam?"

who had had a good look at the dumb tailor—the chief began a hasty search of the collection.

"Here's old 'Circle Jim,'" said the chief once, as he glanced over a handful of photos.

A few minutes later he paused at another likeness.

"Remember this chap?" he asked Lamar, handing him an oblong of cardboard.

Lamar took the photograph and, half aloud, read the words scrawled on it:

"Sam Eagan—alias 'Smiling Sam'—jewel burglar—Close associate for years of 'Circle Jim' Borden—Claims to



The Cobbler Picked Up a Short-Handled Hammer.

keep things as tidy as I can. This is like old times, seeing you again."

"Thanks," said Lamar, seating himself on the shiny bench and taking out his cigarette case. "It's good to see you so nicely fixed here, Sam. And it's good to see you aren't scared at sight of—"

"That's right, sir," chimed in Eagan, with a big laugh of genuine amusement. "Why, I can remember the day when I'd a run a-screamin' up a tree if you came in sight. Lord, but it's worth while not to be scared stiff every time a detective happens 'round!"

Abruptly Max came to the object of his visit.

"Eagan," he said, "I've called around here this morning to see if I can get some information from you. I want to talk with you about 'Circle Jim' Borden."

"Old 'Circle Jim!'" exclaimed Sam. "Why, Jim's dead. Too dead to skin."

"You and he were pretty close friends, weren't you?"

"Me and Jim? Yes. Good friends for more years than you'd know how to remember," replied Sam.

Max caught sight of the shabby and dusty shoe lying on the bench beside him—the shoe at whose heel the cobbler had been tinkering when his visitor entered. Lamar picked up the shoe, absent-mindedly and, taking hold of the tip of its laces, began to swing it carelessly to and fro, as if it had been an uncouth pendulum. Sam watched him in furtive anxiety. Max went on:

"What I want to ask you about is the queer Red Circle on the back of Jim Borden's hand. You remember it, of course?"

"Sure I remember it, sir. Who wouldn't?" answered Sam, adding:

holding. As he had been abstractedly shaking it to and fro he had all at once noticed that a faint rattling sound came from somewhere within the shoe.

"There's something loose in the heel of this shoe," he said, "something that rattles like a loose bit of metal."

Sam did not answer. Surreptitiously the cobbler had reached behind him and had picked up the heavy, short-handled hammer with which he had been working.

"Yes," went on Lamar, "there's something rattles in this heel. Just as if there was a compartment inside, with something lying loose in it."

He picked up an awl from the bench and inserted it between heel-tap and "upper." Eagan drew a long breath and half-lifted the hammer.

"Good morning, Sam," came a clear young voice from the doorway. "I'm going out of town for the summer. I stopped in on my way to the station to see how you are getting on and to tell you—Oh, how are you, Mr. Lamar? It's so dark in here, after the sunshine, I didn't see you."

The spell was broken. The tension was relaxed. Lamar, at sight of June Travis, let the shoe tumble to the floor, forgotten, as he sprang up to greet her. Sam laid down the hammer with a grunt of reaction. As Lamar strode forward to meet June the cobbler thrust the shoe into the breast of his own shirt and substituted for it another one from a nearby pile on the floor.

"How are things going, Sam?" asked June, cheerily, turning from Max as the cobbler reached her side. "Is the rheumatism any better? And do people pay their bills any more promptly?"

"The rheumatism is pretty bad,

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
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SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden family. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robe Grant, a tout shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. June, dressed as a boy, recovers Mary's coat from the police. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. At the seaside June steals war engine plans from Todd Drew and sinks them in the sea with her boy's clothes.

SIXTH INSTALLMENT

"FALSE COLORS"

Halfway down the pier, on her way back to the beach, June turned to look seaward. There was nothing to prove that, only a minute before, a large bundle, heavily weighted and containing invention plans worth a million human lives had plunged to depths.

She bent to pick up a broken shell that was lying on the edge of the pier, particularly brilliant ray of sunlight caught the back of her hand, making the red circle look like a scarlet welt on the white flesh. She covered the telltale mark with her other hand, and looked around, guiltily.

Crouched there, the old, stark fear cut into her heart for a moment. As her keen, searching eyes found the beach she sprang to her feet and started toward a little building on the pier, that had been used for a boat-renting office. Once safe in the shadow it cast, she looked shoreward again.

On the beach, running around a corner of the battered shack, she saw Todd Drew and Count Frell. As she watched, they ran down to the sea, and stood looking about, blankly. Their loud, agitated dialogue drifted out to her faintly. She caught the words, "Which way? Find her!"

A wave, a little heavier than the rest, swished noisily under the pier. Something knocked against one of the piles. June turned in sudden fear. She saw the ends of a perpendicular, wooden ladder showing above the edge of the stringpiece.

Bending over, she noted that an empty rowboat was tied fast just below her. She descended, untied the painter and pushed away from the side of the pier. Then, dropping on to the rower's seat, she adjusted the oars and pulled with long, easy strokes.

When she felt that she was at a safe distance, she rested on her oars and looked toward the shore.

Too far away to distinguish faces and well content at her clever escape, June tried not to scan the shore too carefully for the two men who were searching for her.

A man on the beach, who had just raised his glass to learn what the



Mary Dodged Down Behind the Chair.

white spot on the horizon might be, lowered it again before he had a chance to look. Two excited individuals, talking to each other, had come across his line of vision—in fact, one of them had actually stumbled over his white canvas foot and had gone on without apology. He looked after the unmannerly chap, with a half mind to follow and demand redress.

He saw the fellow who had so grossly offended him approach a group of girls. Three of them in bathing

suits were talking to a remarkably pretty fourth, who was sitting on a rock.

Suddenly one of the fellows who broke through the little group, abruptly seized the right hand of the pretty girl, looked closely at the back of it and dropped it just as abruptly. The girl, her eyes blazing with anger, reached for the closed parasol that was lying at her side and raised it in midair, to strike.

The two men backed away, uttering abject apologies and loud protests before the sudden onslaught of indignant femininity; then they broke into a run and made for the esplanade. Slipping his marine glass into his coat pocket, the onlooker, amused, started in pursuit.

He saw the same impudent fellow approach a girl, dressed in a sailor suit, seize her right hand, scan its surface hastily, then drop it and attempt a getaway.

But the girl was too quick for him. Getting hold of the man's injured hand she hung on, calling for help at the top of her lungs. A policeman, a block distant, came running. Just as the curious onlooker reached the spot.

"You're under arrest!" thundered the patrolman. "What do you mean, anyway, by walking around the streets annoying ladies, eh?"

"I wasn't annoying ladies," argued the squirming prisoner. "It's a mistake. I never did such a thing in my life!"

The younger man twisted his arm free and reached into an inner pocket. Drawing out a cardcase, he snatched a bit of pasteboard from it and shoved it under the sniffling nose of this minion of the law.

"That's who I am," he howled ferociously. "Todd Drew, son of the great inventor. Just now, when Count Frell and I were talking business, in a little shack on the beach, someone barricaded the door, reached in through a hole in the wall and stole the plans of the greatest war invention the world has ever known. They're worth a fortune. The hand that reached in and grabbed those papers was marked with a Red Circle—and the person (whoever it was) had on a girl's sailor suit."

"I corroborate all he says," added the count, hastily. "I wish to say—"

"Well, your story sounds grand!" decided the policeman, "but I think you're both liars. So, come along with me."

An hour later, Harry Gage, Lamar's confidential clerk, came into his employer's private office and handed the crime specialist a telegram that read:

Surfton, Aug. 2.—Mr. Max Lamar, 512 Black Bldg.:

Father's war instrument plans stolen. Circular birthmark on back of hand only clue. I am held by police here on charge of annoying girls. Come at once. Todd Drew.

Lamar's brows contracted suddenly as he read, "Circular birthmark!" The Red Circle, of course—and at Surfton!

"I'm off to the beach—Surfton. Anything important comes up, 'phone or wire. Red Circle!"

Arriving at Surfton Lamar jumped from the step of the car and ran toward a little group of three men, one in a policeman's uniform. He grasped the hand of the youngest of the three and shook it heartily.

"It's the most terrible mix-up all around!" this man said to Lamar. "Imagine them holding me for annoying women! Say, for pure imbecility, recommend me to the police of a one-horse burg like this!"

"See here, you!" interrupted the emissary of the law, "that'll do! I'm—"

"That's all right, officer," Lamar broke in soothingly, "my friend is naturally excited over my arrest. I'll be responsible for both."

"So you thought you saw a Red Circle on this person's hand, eh?" he continued suavely as they moved off the station platform.

Just within hearing distance, a woman with a suitcase started suddenly.

"Thought nothing!" retorted Drew emphatically, "I saw it. It was as distinct as—er—as anything."

Drew uttered a sudden grunt and pointed ahead of him. The two other men stopped short and looked.

"A sailor suit!" whispered Drew excitedly. "Another one! Shall we—"

Lamar's face lighted up. He put a detaining hand on the agitated fellow's arm.

"I'm afraid you will have to leave this sailor suit alone, Drew," he said. "The young lady is a very dear friend of mine—Miss June Travis. I want you to meet her. She's charming."

Within ten feet of them, June, looking out over the water, had been unaware of their approach. Staring into Lamar's face, now, she lost her composure for the merest fraction of a second. The next instant she had extended her right hand and placed it between his two eager ones.

Drew and the count, suspicious of any and all sailor suits, crowded up,

intent upon the hand that Lamar held prisoner. A smooth white surface with just the tiniest golden brown freckle on one knuckle met his eye. He laughed at the other two in sheer amusement.

"May I present Mr. Drew, Miss Travis? And Count Frell, Miss Travis. It's strange you people haven't met before. Surfton is a small place."

"It is strange you haven't met at some of the functions that have been given at the hotel. You men are stopping there and I'm sure Miss Travis attends all the dances," said Max.

"I do, indeed," said June gayly. "There's to be a ball there tonight, by the way. Mother and I are going. Won't I see you all there?"

"I'll be there," he promised firmly. "And I'll bring the count and Drew with me, Miss Travis."

"Just look at the crowd!" June exclaimed with delight, as their car turned into the drive leading to the hotel. "This is going to be the best dance of the season."

An attendant in livery helped them from the car. June took hold of Mary's hand and helped her up the steps.

"Just don't you let me catch you flirting—that's all," she whispered wickedly in the old woman's ear; and Mrs. Travis wondered what Mary's sudden indignant exclamation was about.

"Everyone's going inside, dear," the nurse said, as they reached the top of the steps. "Let me take your things to the coat room or you'll be late for the first dance."

"Oh, I don't care about the first dance. I haven't promised it to anyone. I'm going to see who's here first. Stay out here with me just a minute."

She walked to one of the long French windows and looked inside. The scene was gay enough to dispel any shadows. Yet over in one corner, leaning against a pillar, his arms fold-

costume kept dancing into Mary's line of vision. She was leaning back against her partner's arm, looking into his eyes, a taunting smile on her thin vivid lips.

While Mary was deciding that this was quite the most disgusting type of woman she had ever seen, the strange girl and her partner collided clumsily with another couple. The woman with whom they collided—a plump blonde and beautifully gowned—got the worst of the collision.

Mary saw her bend down and rub her ankles. Then, while proper apologies were made by the woman in black and her partner, the little blonde limped away on her partner's arm and sought refuge on a settee near Mary. The acute pain in her foot must have made her feel faint. For the man immediately went in search of a glass of water and returned with it as quickly as possible.

After taking a few swallows, Mary saw the blonde girl put her hand over her heart and draw a deep breath of relief. But the expression of renewed strength gave way instantly to startled surprise. She was passing her hands rapidly over the front of her elaborately embroidered gown.

"What's the matter, Mrs. Hinkle?" Mary heard the young man say.

"I've lost my brooch—my diamond brooch!" gasped the woman. "I had it on a minute ago, I'm sure."

"Surely it must be around somewhere if you had it on just a moment ago," protested the young man. "Maybe you dropped it when we had our tumble. Wait here and I'll go look around that spot."

"No, I'll come with you. It's made me nervous. I couldn't sit still."

As they passed several chatting groups Mrs. Hinkle announced her loss, loudly. Soon the floor was covered with people searching for the missing diamonds.

Suddenly Mary realized that June was not in the little throng of search-



Emblazoned on the Back of the Hand Was an Irregular Circle of Scarlet!

ed, his chin held closely in one hand was Lamar, in a brown study.

Mary crept up beside her and looked over her shoulder. Her eyes fell on Lamar; and she started so violently that June put out an arm to steady her.

"There's nothing to be frightened about," she said soothingly. "Nothing at all, only—"

"Only what?" asked Mary, quaveringly.

"Only I'm going to put on my gloves."

A minute later she entered the ball room with her mother. Presently she was surrounded by men imploring her to allow them to autograph her dance card. Lamar glanced up, saw her and started across the floor in her direction.

Mary, sitting on a little settee against the wall of the ballroom saw him take June's hand and bend over it. She half rose from the seat, then remembered where she was and sat down again; gripping the arm of the chair and watching every move of the little group.

Suddenly a woman appeared at one of the pillars—a woman who attracted attention by her daring attire. She wore a gown whose foundation was of flesh color chiffon. The overdress was simply a network of jet. The costume was daringly décolleté, and was held in place over the shoulders by a delicate chain of jet beads. Among the pretty, girlish dance frocks it looked bizarre—all but indecent.

Just for a moment she leaned against the pillar, waving a huge, black ostrich fan to and fro. Over the soft tips of the graceful feathers her eyes met those of a venturesome young man. She signaled. He obeyed. Mary watched, until the two were lost in the maze of dancers. Then her eyes wandered back to June, who was still deeply engrossed in what Lamar was saying.

Mary wished that some of the men would come up and claim June for a dance. Anything to be rid of Lamar. The slender woman in the startling

"I am George Radner, the manager of this hotel, Mr. Lamar!" The man spoke hurriedly, as if distressed. "Several guests have lost articles of jewelry tonight. I am afraid a professional thief is at work among them. Can't you do something about it, Mr. Lamar? I hate to trouble you, but—"

"Oh, that's all right—that's all right," Lamar muttered indistinctly. "Has anyone who reported a loss to you said anything about a Red Circle, Mr. Radner?"

"No. I don't think so. Nobody has the slightest clue. It's the cleverest sort of theft I've ever known. There's a master crook operating here, I'm certain."

"I'll see what I can do, Mr. Radner. Just go out and mingle with the guests as though nothing had occurred, will you? I'll be out in a minute."

Lamar came back to the bench and sat down, his hands clenched tightly, his lower jaw protruding in an ugly, determined way. The Japanese silk draperies behind him moved slightly as if in obedience to a gentle breeze. June put her hand over his, soothingly.

"You are terribly worried over this mystery," she said softly. "Let me help you solve it, won't you? Who knows but that I may develop into a regular detec—er—crime specialist."

Annoyed and worried as he was, Lamar threw back his head and laughed heartily.

"All right, Miss Travis," he said gravely. "I'll appoint you my first assistant on this case. Perhaps you can help me."

June turned toward him, her face alight.

"I'll do my best," she promised.

"Will you let me come to see you tomorrow morning to tell you a few more details of this case?" he inquired eagerly.

"I'd be delighted to have you come," June replied heartily. "I'm rather excited about the idea of joining forces with you and—oh!"

She broke off suddenly and put her hand to her throat. It was bare. Her pearl pendant was gone! She twisted around with lightning rapidity, dragging Lamar around with her. The portieres of Japanese silk were parted slightly. Protruding from the opening was a white hand with slender, tapering fingers. Hanging from the over-manicured fingertips was a pendant of pearls. Emblazoned on the back of the hand was an irregular circle of brilliant scarlet!

Lamar and June sat at if paralyzed, until a scraping sound shattered the spell.

Lamar sprang to his feet, jumped over the bench and tore the portieres from the heavy brass poles that supported them. He found himself in a little oblong recess. Directly in front of him was a long window opening presumably on the porch.

With a muttered imprecation he threw himself at the closed window, expecting it to give. The force of his onslaught shattered several of the small panes, but his progress was blocked by a wicker porch settee that had evidently been placed there for that very purpose.

Unable to check his speed he tumbled headlong over this settee and landed bruised against the outer rail of the porch. The frail settee had cracked under his weight and the thud of his falling body sounded unnaturally loud on the still air.

It was this sudden jarring that awakened Mary from her nap in the deep chair. With the dull gaze, or a person just roused from sleep, the old woman rubbed her eyes and looked about. In the same room, but in a far distant corner, she heard the soft rustle of a woman's skirt. Then the clink of glass against metal.

She twisted quietly in the chair until she was crouching on her knees on the seat of it, facing the back. Cautiously she raised her body until her eyes were just above the edge. What she saw made her forget her own predicament.

Over in a half-lit corner was a large square pedestal holding a bronze statuette. Standing so that its shadow half concealed her, was the daring Woman in Black, her right hand lifted so that the feeble light from the hanging lamp fell athwart its back. On it blazed a Red Circle!

Mary dodged down behind the chair top as the woman slowly turned her head. After a few seconds the sound of liquid dripping into a glass made her anxious to look again.

The woman was holding a small sponge in her left hand. She squeezed it dry into a glass half full of water. Smiling whimsically to herself, she rubbed the back of her right hand with the dampened sponge. The Red Circle disappeared.

Breathless with excitement, Mary strained her eyes to catch every move. She saw the woman take up the glass, deliberately spill the liquid on the floor, and gather a brush, tiny box of water color paints and the sponge from the pedestal. Leaving the glass where it was, she opened a false pocket in the skirt of her gown, dropped the several articles into it and quietly left the room.

Mary waited until she was reasonably sure the woman would not return, then left her chair. Hurrying over to the statue she picked up the glass and examined it. There was no mark on it except the ring that the colored water had left. At the foot of the pedestal was the large, damp spot. Mary tent to feel it with the palm of her hand; to make sure the whole thing wasn't a strange dream.

When she found her way back to the ballroom it was nearly deserted. Wandering about looking for Mrs. Travis and June, she came face to

face with a young man who was saying good-night to one of the hotel guests.

"Why Mary?" exclaimed the man in great surprise, "where have you been? Miss Travis was looking all over for you. When she couldn't find you she decided you had gone home without her knowing it. She and Mrs. Travis have left. I'm going that way. Let me take you home in my car."

When he put her down at the cottage he warned her:

"Don't wake Miss Travis if she's sleeping, Mary. The poor girl's half dead. She danced more than anybody



She Told of the Woman With the Red Circle.

there—mostly with that chap Lamar. Mrs. Travis said she was going to make her sleep until noon tomorrow."

The next morning at eleven-thirty, June ran out on the porch and clapped her hands over Mary's eyes just as the nurse was finishing her happy daily perusal of the death column—in the Morning Star.

"Guess!" she commanded.

"It's my lamb," said Mary, complacently, trying to smooth her ruffled front hair.

"Aren't you a sly, old lady, sneaking home hours and hours ahead of me, last night? I didn't dare go near your room when I came in, for fear you'd wake up."

"I wasn't there, pet," Mary told her. "I didn't leave the hotel until after you did."

"What!"

With a cautious glance around, the nurse started to recount the happenings of the night before. She told haltingly, fearful that she might omit an important detail. When she got to the point of her recital where the Woman in Black left the room, June clutched her hand excitedly.

"And you let her go?" she exclaimed, almost unbelieving. "Why? Why?"

"Of course I let her go—the old woman was offended to think her judgment in the matter was questioned—she could have broke away from me and made her escape—and then she would have been warned. This way, she thinks she's safe and she won't hide. I'd know her again, the minute I lay eyes on her."

June pulled her up from the chair, impetuously.

"You've got to come right over to the hotel and tell the whole thing to Mr. Lamar. Don't you see how tremendously important it is to him—and to us?" she added thoughtfully.

Mary protested violently as June dragged her down the path and toward the hotel.

"Look! Oh, what luck! There is Mr. Lamar now; just leaving Mr. Radner at the entrance to the hotel. Hurry, Mary, and we'll be able to catch him."

June waved her hand excitedly. Lamar ran toward them.

"Any news?" he asked quickly.

"Tell him," June said briefly.

Mary had gotten almost through her story, when suddenly her eyes bulged in their sockets and she pointed a dramatic forefinger over Lamar's shoulder.

"There she is!" she gasped, her voice cracking in her throat. "That's the woman! The one with the suitcase, walking down the path on her way to the station. That's the Woman in Black!"

"Are you sure?" the pressure of Lamar's fingers hurt her arm. "Sure!"

"I'm sure," she answered firmly. "I'd know her anywhere."

"I have to go immediately, Miss Travis," Lamar said, keeping one eye on the disappearing figure. "I'm going to trail that woman. Here's one time that Fate is playing into my hands."

They watched him walk rapidly around the back of the hotel and take a short cut to the station.

Two hours later Max Lamar strolled carelessly along a residential block in the city. Finding great difficulty in lighting his cigarette he stepped into a vestibule, just as the woman he was trailing turned the corner and entered a large apartment house.

Giving her time to get upstairs, Lamar stepped from his hiding place, sauntered toward the same entrance and leaned against one of the stone pillars, aimlessly blowing rings of smoke skyward.

"Well, my little blackbird," he mused, "your wings are clipped and your cage won't be a golden one, either. At last, the Red Circle mystery is going to be cleared—perhaps!"

(END OF SIXTH INSTALLMENT.)

THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. June, dressed as a boy, recovers Mary's coat from the police. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. At the seaside June steals her invention plans from Todd Drew and sinks them in the sea with her boy's clothes. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle paints the Red Circle on her hand and robs the guests at a ball. Mary sees her wash off the mark and points her back to Lamar who follows her back to town.

SEVENTH INSTALLMENT THE THIRD DEGREE

Far out on the horizon a sloop veered to the wind and bent its graceful sails as if to scoop the crest of a frothy little wave.

Mary and June were sitting on the observation porch of the Travis home, looking out over the beach.

"It's almost deserted," June said with some amusement. "At this hour, any other morning, the beach would be crowded. The dance must have played havoc."

"I think you should have slept longer, too," Mary smoothed back the girl's hair. "A young person like you needs all the sleep she can get."

"Why, I'm as fresh as a daisy," rebelled June. "If I stay in bed too long I get all stupid and loggy. And, just think how terrible it would be if I had been lazy this morning! That Woman in Black would have gotten away safely. As long as I'm a real sleuth now, I can't afford to sleep, overhours, you know."

Mary looked up at the mischievous, smiling face. A shadow of fear crept into her eyes.

"I wish you wouldn't have anything more to do with this," she begged gently. "You are so young, so impulsive. Don't you know if you play with fire you must be burned?"

"But I'm not playing with fire," objected June. "And, besides, don't you see that I've taken out the safest sort of an insurance policy by joining forces with Mr. Lamar in tracking the Red Circle?"

"I don't like it—I don't like anything about it," Mary clasped and unclasped her hands nervously. "You have become so headstrong, dear. Ever since this mark came on your hand, you're so different."

"Oh, look!" June exclaimed, glad of an excuse to change the subject. "Look at the monkey, Mary. Isn't he perfectly adorable? Oh, you're not looking in the right place. He's doing all sorts of tricks. Isn't he wonderful?"

"I think he's an awful looking thing. I'm going into the house. I don't want to look at him any more."

"All right; you go in. I'll stay out here."

June leaned out over the porch rail, keeping her eyes fastened on the organ grinder. Mary watched the girl bite her lips and frown. The signs were alarming. The old woman looked down at the hand on the rail, with



Started to Cut the Monkey's Rope.

fear and trembling. Her worst suspicions were realized. A faint red ring appeared. Mary put out her hand as if to stop its growing more vivid. Slowly the color came into it. It blazed forth in all its strength just as June exclaimed angrily:

"Oh, why does he mistreat that poor, captive animal? A defenseless mite like that! It's outrageous the way he pulls that rope—just look, he's even kicking him! I'm going down there to stop him."

"You're going to do no such thing! The idea of getting so worked up over a monkey!"

"It isn't because it's a monkey. It's because it's heartless cruelty to a dumb animal."

"Anyhow, you're coming right in the house with me."

"No, I'm not."

"Look at your hand," said Mary tersely.

Startled, June obeyed. The Red Circle glared back at her with malevolent intensity. Just for a second her face clouded. Then the same, queer, mischievous smile returned.

"Well, what of it?" she challenged.

"You know," Mary answered, simply. "Come into the house with me before you get into any trouble, dear."

"I don't want to."

"Please. I'm so worried, pet."

"Oh, all right. Only don't look so distressed."

Upstairs, June entered her room and ran to the window. The organ grinder had moved out of sight. A strange, sickening sensation came over her as she thought of him and his treatment of the monkey.

On a little table near the window a small pair of scissors caught the sun and reflected the light, so that it dazzled the eyes. June caught sight of them. She picked them up quickly and slipped them, almost involuntarily into the pocket of her dress. Then she reached for a small sport hat that was lying on a chair and ran out of the room, closing the door behind her.

On the sand, leaning against a pile, under the pier, sat the Italian organ grinder sound asleep—his old, battered organ propped up beside him. The monkey, sitting on his lap, pulled restlessly at his coat.

The man waked stupidly for the fraction of a second, cuffed the monkey over the head, forced him down on his lap again and went back to sleep.

June crept around, under the pier, keeping well behind him until she made sure that he was really asleep—not shamming. Very cautiously she dropped to her knees and crawled toward the organ.

With remarkable rapidity she unbuckled the broad, tough strap that was attached to it and got on her feet. Then she listened to the Italian's loud breathing, before she moved forward quietly until she stood directly behind the pile against which he was leaning.

There was no fear on her face. Only caution and a certain cunning boldness. Stealthily, she slipped the strap around the sleeping man's body, drawing it back behind the pile. She put the eyelet end through the buckle, but did not fasten it. Then she put the scissors on the sand beside her.

Having proceeded so far successfully, she thought for an instant, trying to determine what her next move would be. Picking up the scissors she slipped her right hand around the pile and started to cut the monkey's rope, close to the Italian's hand. The monkey, sensing that a deliverer had come, laid his little face against her hand, softly.

June pushed him back gently. The scissors were dull. The rope was tough. The effort to cut it brought the blood to her hand. Slowly, the Italian blinked his eyes and opened them.

Immediately under his nose was a strong young hand wielding a glittering weapon. Half-conscious, he shuddered inwardly. In his nightmare, someone was working out a vendetta—successfully. His eyes closed. The vividness of the dream was too much for him, however. He opened them again. This time all he could see was a ring of scarlet—an omen of eternal bloodshed.

Stupid with sleep, he made a half attempt to sit erect. On the instant June pulled the strap tight with her left hand, buckled it, seized the monkey with the right and sped off down the beach, the cut rope trailing behind her.

On the edge of the sand, an old woman in black, ghastly pale and petrified with fear, watched her go. Strapped to the pile, the Italian was kicking up an awful row.

In the distance, June ran into the entrance to Surftown park and found a spot girdled by shrubbery. In the midst of it stood a giant tree with an absurdly thick trunk.

The monkey sniffed affectionately at her chin and raised his little paw.

June hugged him up to her, cut the rope close to his collar, and started to take off his ludicrous little hat and coat. All undressed, as he was meant to be, the monkey reverted to type and gazed longingly at an overhanging branch. June looked up at the low-swaying foliage.

"Of course you want to get up there, you poor, ill-treated little beastie," she whispered to him. "That's what I stole you for. To set you free. Say 'thank you' to the lady and shake hands."

She reached up and pulled the branch down to her. Then she waited to see what he would do. With just one regretful look, as though to say, "I'm not ungrateful—but oh, you tree!" he leaped from her arms and

scampered up the tree. On a high branch he sat down and looked at her. June waved her hand.

Back on the beach, Mary watched the struggling Pietro, and tried desperately to decide what the wisest move would be. His awful cries would attract a larger crowd in a few minutes.

It flashed upon her, suddenly, that there was a way of protecting June, even now. With the wrap still on her arm she ran toward the screaming Italian. Indicating that she was going to release him, Mary unbuckled the strap, just as a policeman came running up.

Pietro scrambled to his feet, choking with rage. A torrent of sound poured from his thick oily lips.

"My monk gone—stole—girl—woman—gotta round on hand! Stole! Cut-a rope! Sripe-a monk! Beat it!"

Mary stepped forward and spoke to the officer.

"It seems that someone stole his monkey. He's showing you the cut rope in his hand."

The patrolman raised his cap.

"I didn't see you at first, Miss Mary," he said pleasantly. "Yes, I understood that someone had copped the monkey; but what's he getting at, drawing things on the back of his hand and moving his fingers like he was cutting paper?"

"As near as I can make out," Mary answered slowly, "the person who stole the animal cut the rope with scissors and had a mark of some kind on the back of her hand."

"A mark!" the policeman jumped eagerly at the word. "Say, was it a red mark—a Red Circle?" he asked Pietro excitedly.

Seeing that at last someone was beginning to understand, Pietro went back into Italian hysteria. The policeman turned again to Mary.

"You've been on the beach some time, haven't you? Do you remember seeing anyone go past with a monkey?"

"Certainly," the old woman replied promptly. "I remember distinctly seeing a young woman on the beach with a monkey."

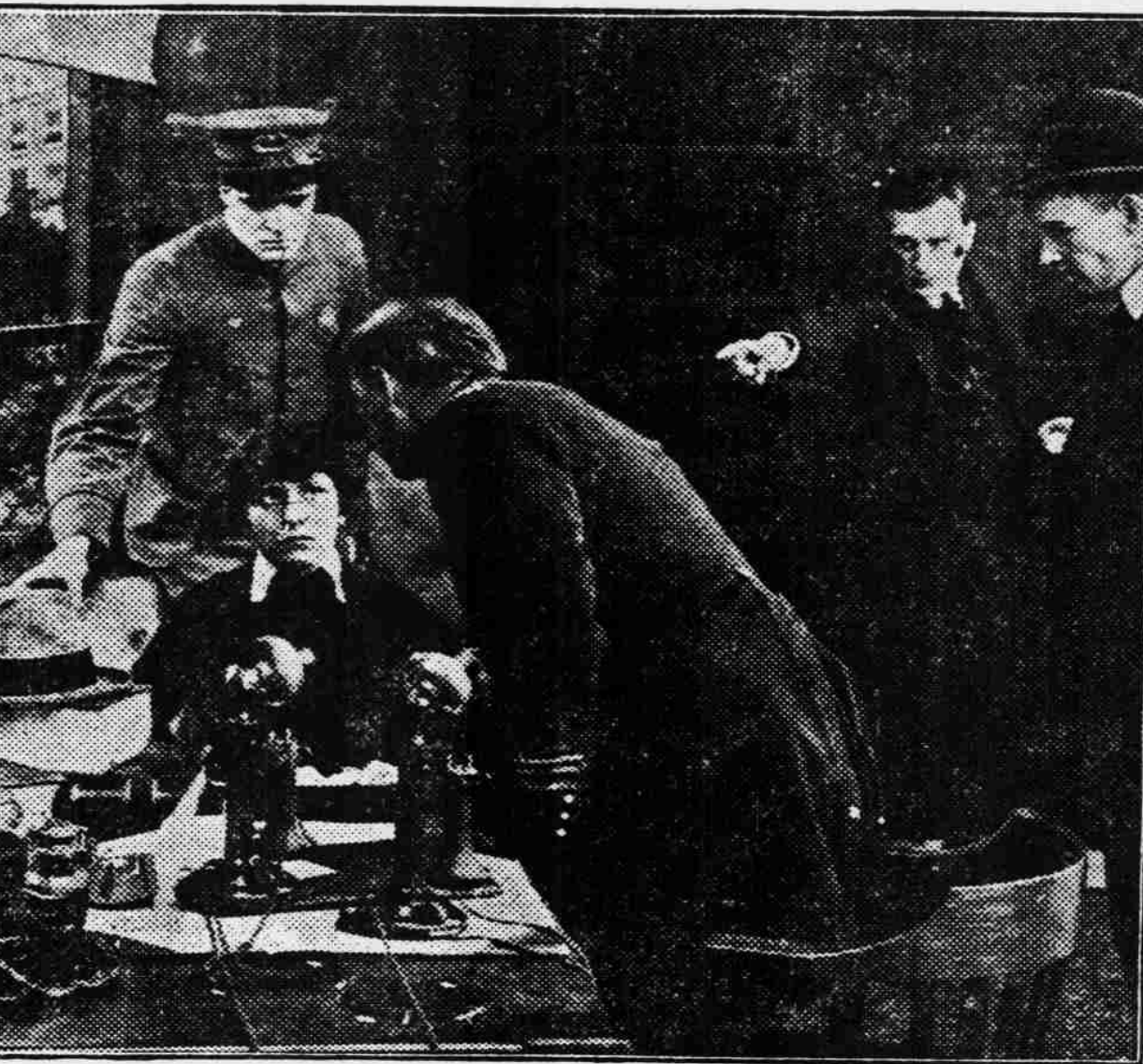
"Do you remember which way she went?" he asked.

Mary, apparently thought deeply for a moment.

"Yes," she said at last, very deliberately, "she went down the beach in that direction."

Her finger pointed directly opposite to the way June had gone.

"Thank you," said the policeman. Motioning to Pietro, he started on



"You Don't Know Anything About Red Circles?"

a run down the sand, the other spectators following closely.

Leaning up against the pillar of the house where "The Woman in Black" lived, Lamar, blowing rings of cigarette smoke skyward, mused:

"I wonder what June is doing. I wonder if she is thinking of me."

His dreams were pleasant. Knowing that his quarry was safe in the house and that she seemed unsuspecting of being trailed, Lamar did not see the use for any extra trick work.

"When in doubt, pump the elevator boy," had always been Lamar's motto. He turned to enter the house. A thick rubber mat, bound in metal, tripped him. He stumbled through the doorway and collided with a woman.

Bent over as he was, he couldn't see her face. His gaze fell upon a black leather handbag and a paper parcel that could have contained anything from a picnic lunch to a pair of shoes. Bracing himself against the sides of the entrance he tried to get his balance.

"Perhaps you'll allow me to pass," a cold, sarcastic voice broke in upon his distress.

"Why certainly, madam, certainly," gasped poor Lamar, again threatened with a fall as he tried to be courtly.

Then he raised his face. One look at the dark, slightly aquiline features and he was very erect and very cool.

"On second thoughts," he said calmly, "I don't think I will. You're under arrest."

"Under arrest? Me?" she tossed her head, boldly. "I'd like to see you try to arrest me!"

"You're seeing it now," said Lamar simply.

"Oh, so you think you can bully me into submitting to arrest, do you?"

Just for an instant he flashed a pair of handcuffs by a chain. They clanked ominously as he dropped them back into his pocket.

"Do you come—or don't you?" he inquired politely.

"Oh, I'll go," she answered after a minute's thought.

Ten minutes later, when she rebelled, outside the entrance to the police station, he seized her arm and hustled her in, bringing her up before the sergeant's desk.

"Well, Mr. Lamar," said the desk man, leaning over the edge to shake hands, "what can I do for you?"

"I have just arrested this—er—this lady on suspicion, sergeant."

"Indeed!" The round-faced, gray-haired officer looked over his glasses, sharply. "Name, please."

The woman raised her eyebrows. "Name, I said!" thundered the sergeant.

"Oh, I don't know that I have to give it," she said contemptuously.

"Oh, yes you do," Lamar broke in, "a word to the wise, you know. I advise you to make as little trouble as possible. And let me relieve you of your parcel and hand bag."

"La Salle. Alma La Salle," she almost spat the name at the sergeant.

Lamar opened the paper parcel, disclosing a pair of old shoes evidently on their way to the cobbler's to be soled and heeled. He threw them to one side, disappointed. Then with a caustic "May I?" he opened the handbag and dumped its contents on the sergeant's desk.

Lamar rapidly searched the mass and found nothing of importance.

"Well, what're you going to do about it?" she inquired with a smile.

"I'm going to have you searched," said Lamar quietly. "Sergeant, will you have someone search Miss La Salle, please?"

The sergeant pressed the buzzer at his right hand. A door in the back of the room opened almost instantly.

A portly woman in a blue-and-white striped dress, partly covered with a white apron, stood at the threshold for a second, then came swiftly into the room.

"Mrs. Murphy," said the sergeant, briefly, "will you please search this woman and make your report on what you find?"

"Oh, Mrs. Murphy, would you mind making your report to me in the chief's office? I'm going in there now," Lamar called after her.

Lamar entered Chief Allen's office, shook hands and dropped wearily into a chair beside the desk.

"What's up? You look beat out," was the chief's greeting.

"Oh, I'm not beat out," the Crime Specialist squared his shoulders significantly. "I'm not beat out by a

"That's right. Now will you go back and bring her into this office in five minutes? I'll be ready for her then. What's her name?" he asked Lamar as the matron left the room. "And her address. I'll send two men over to her home."

He took the blank from his secretary and tried the point of his fountain pen.

"Alma La Salle," he repeated after Lamar, "'301 Quincy street.' Holt, send Quinn and Mulligan over. Tell them to do a good job—rush it—and beat it back here as quickly as they can."

There was a knock on the door, a few minutes later. It was opened in obedience to the chief's "Come in."

Alma stood framed in the doorway, her face still as insolently haughty as when Lamar had first spoken to her.

The chief eyed her steadily. It was a type he knew well. Very difficult to shake in giving testimony, very sharp-tongued. The only salvation lay in getting this woman furiously angry.

He had found that rage loosens the tongues of most women.

"Name?" he said before she had a chance to collect herself.

"Oh, you know my name," she answered viciously. "What do you suppose I think you two have been doing in here all this time—having a kaffee klatsch?"

Lamar moved forward to intervene, but Allen waved him back.

"I think I can handle this young woman," he said easily. "If I can make her understand, in the first place, that I'll jail her immediately unless she answers my questions straight and as soon as I put them."

"Name?" he repeated, significantly.

"Alma La Salle."

"I've seen you here before, haven't I?"

"You have not," this very emphatically.

"No? I may be mistaken. I thought I had. What were you doing at Surftown?"

"Wasn't at Surftown. Never heard of the place."

"Well, of course the transfer that you have in your bag, punched 'Surftown,' may be part of a collection. I hardly thought so," drawled Lamar.

"I tell you I've never been there," she maintained with angry persistence.

"Well, we'll let that go as it is," said the chief suavely. "You're an attractive woman, Miss La Salle. How is it that you are not married?"

"Who says I'm not?"

"Oh, so you are. Then why are you living alone in an apartment where you're known as 'Miss La Salle'?"

"Is that anyone's business?"

"I choose to make it mine. How do you get your living, Miss La Salle?"

"I have an income."

"From what sort of investments? Bonds—stocks—mortgages?"

"Er—mortgages."

"Ah, the safest sort of an investment—providing they are first mortgages. So that's where your income comes from?"

"You two think you're putting me through the third degree, don't you? Why you're a bunch of amateurs. Make me break down? Lord! You haven't even got my goat!"

"Oh, I think we have that, all right," Lamar remarked with aggravating calm. "Now, I'm going to tell you a few things. We've had you trailed for forty-eight hours. Yes, that gets under the skin, eh? And all we want to know is why you take the trouble to paint red circles on your hand when you operate so cleverly without them. What's the use of doing things that'll help spot you—eh?"

Alma looked at him with an amused smile.

"You may be talking sense," she remarked contemptuously. "But to me it sounds like they'd just let you out of a bat factory."

"You don't know anything about Red Circles?"

"I do not."

The door opened suddenly. Two men, one in uniform, entered and placed a suitcase on the chief's desk.

Alma started forward in her chair.

"Yes, it's yours," soothed Lamar. "We won't injure any of your things. We just want to take a look. They've just brought it from your rooms."

Lamar opened the suitcase. He pulled out soft piles of silk lingerie and tossed them on the desk.

"Say, have a heart the way you handle those things," Alma said sharply. "They cost money."

"You bet they do," Lamar answered the command. "Those first mortgages are certainly good to you."

His hand closed on something smooth and cold. He dragged it out from between the folds of an embroidered kimono. It was a paint box! He fumbled as he opened it, because he did not want to take his eyes off Alma's face. He was surprised to find that there was not a quiver of an eyelash.

Once open, he held up the box so the light hit the surface of the little tabs of paint.

"Just as I thought," he exclaimed, gleefully. "Oh, you're not such a clever little Raffles after all, Alma! You see, chief, only the red paint has been used. Wait a minute. I'll find the sponge."

He plunged his hand into the suitcase again and held up the tiny sponge, then bent over Alma solicitously.

"You see, if you'd been really smart," he told her, "you'd have smeared up the other paints too. Then you could say that you were just an amateur artist who went to Surftown to do seascapes."

"Say, you think you're a wonder don't you?" she scoffed.

Suddenly the door burst open and slammed back against the wall so that the whole room shook. The sergeant, two old shoes swinging from his left hand, rushed in, his face scarlet with excitement.

"Look at the swag! Look at the swag!" he shouted.

Unclosing his right hand, he dropped a palmful of jeweled ornaments on the chief's desk. Alma jumped to her feet. Terror blanched her cheeks. Her eyes were wild. With sudden cunning she



"It's Almost Deserted," Said June.

bent, ducked under Lamar's arm and made for the window. The chief swung around and grabbed the sleeve of her waist. It cracked at the shoulder seam. He put her, struggling, back in the chair, and stood in front of her.

"Where'd you get it, sergeant?" Lamar asked, holding up a string of pearls and a diamond lavalliere.

"In the heel of the shoe. I was ticketing the articles taken from the different prisoners today, before I sent them into the other room, and all of a sudden I catch sight of this split heel. It looks queer. So I take my penknife out, just for fun, and start picking at it. And the thing comes off and there lays the swag!"

"Give me the other one," said Lamar.

He struck it against the palm of his hand. It rattled. Suddenly a similar incident came to his mind. He dropped the stone and seized the chief's arm.

"Yesterday when I was in 'Smiling Sam's' shop," he exclaimed suddenly, "I—"

Alma uttered a short, sharp sound, then pressed her hand over her mouth.

"Ah—that's the one—eh? 'Smiling Sam?' Good girl—good girl! You screamed at just the right time. You couldn't have done better if you'd been rehearsed. Chief, will you give me a raiding squad? I'm coming down on that old smiler today—now! You hold the woman."

Lamar darted from the office.

"Lock her up," Allen told the sergeant.

Out in the street Lamar was coaching his men:

"There's an alleyway back of this joint. I don't know how you get to it through the shop, but take my word it's a very important means of exit to 'Smiling Sam.' I want you two officers to get into that alleyway and wait there for whatever happens. Vaughan, here, will go into the store with me."

The two men started off down a side street. Lamar and Vaughan walked quickly until they got to the corner of "Smiling Sam's" street. There they stopped deliberately and lighted cigarettes. They saw a man, who was hanging around outside, dive inside the shop.

"A lookout!" muttered Lamar. "Come on, Vaughan! We'll get in there double quick, before they have a chance to make a getaway. Anyhow, the boys in the alley will get them."

Lamar and Vaughan dashed across the street and through the ramshackle entrance to the store. At the back wall they saw a stout man trying to hurl himself through an opening that seemed less like a door than an earthquake gap. A sudden jerk from the other side of the wall yanked him through. A row of shelves slid into view. The opening was closed.

"Open it! Open it!" howled Lamar to Vaughan. "Wait! I'll find the spring! It's a secret door."

He passed his finger tips over the entire wall surface. He swept shelves of shoe boxes to the floor. He got on his knees and tested the floor. His rapid, excited search was unsuccessful.

"Get a bench!" Max told Vaughan. "Get that heavy bench over there and batter it down. Hammer it, man! Give me one end of it. Now! Together!"

A long, crackling sound tore out through the heavy banging. A crack that showed yellowish white appeared. One leg of the bench crashed through the wood and stuck. The door began to give.

From the yard somewhere to the rear of them, arose the din of fierce battle.

END OF SEVENTH INSTALLMENT.

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curio automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs a bank, a loan shark. Mary June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. June, dressed as a boy, recovers Mary's coat from the police. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. At the seaside June recalls war inventions from Todd Drew and sinks them in the sea with her boy's clothes. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle points the Red Circle on her hand and robs the guests at a ball. Mary sees her wash off the mark and points her out to Lamar who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after "Smiling Sam."

EIGHTH INSTALLMENT

"PEACE AT ANY PRICE."

Inch by inch, the door began to give. Under the smashing blows of the two men the gap widened. A jagged rent appeared across the surface of the panel. One more mighty crash of the improvised battering ram, and the hunchback burst in.

There was a hole in the secret door big enough for a slender man to wriggle through. Lamar dived head first into the breach, closely followed by his companion.

Into the inner room they plunged, and across it, guided by the noise of fighting outside.

The low door leading to the yard was ajar. Through the doorway hurried Lamar, bending double to clear its top. Across the yard he raced and out of the gate into the alley, arriving just as the two policemen were putting the finishing touches upon the subjugation of Mr. Thomas Dunn.

A crack on the head had momentarily dazed that industrious young battler, and before his cigarette-sodden brain could clear from the impact one of the policemen had snapped a pair of handcuffs around the prisoner's unwashed wrists.

"Now, then!" said Lamar, briskly, "where's your boss?"

"Huh?" grunted Dunn.

"I say, where's your boss? Where's Sam Eagan? Where is he hiding?"

Tom looked dully bewildered.

"I don't know no Sam Eagan."

"One of you take him to headquarters," Max ordered. "The chief will find a way to make him talk. You two others go through the building, cellar to roof. I'm going back for another look around the shop. It'll be worth while, if I can find what I want."

A minute later Lamar was back in the wrecked cobbler shop. He had remembered the shoe that had rattled when he so idly played with it on his visit to Sam the previous day. And he set to work looking for it.

One disreputable piece of footgear after another, he picked up from the heap in the corner of the room. And at last he found the shoe he sought.

With an awl he pried loose the run-down heel. It was hollow. Empty though the hollow now was, it corresponded in every way with that in the



Thrust the Hat Into It and Piled the Sand Over It.

shoe Alma La Salle had been carrying under her arm when she was arrested.

"No sign of Eagan, either in this building or the next," reported a policeman, coming in as Max stood examining the hollow heel.

"Plenty of signs of him here, though," answered Lamar, holding up the shoe. "I've found what I was looking for. It's the link I needed to connect Smiling Sam Eagan with the jewel thefts that have been bothering you people."

Ten minutes later Chief Allen was listening attentively to Max Lamar's story. Fifteen minutes later the following message was on its way to

every town in the state:

Wanted for Burglary and for "Fence" Work: Samuel Eagan, Alias "Smiling Sam."

"We'll have the city scraped for him, too, of course," added the chief, turning back to Lamar, "but there's not much use in that. He's too slick to hang around here. He'll beat it for the nearest out-of-town hiding place and lie low there till it's safe to travel farther."

And in "Smiling Sam's" case, the chief had diagnosed the procedure with the skill of a mind reader.

Sam, hastening through the yard at Tom Dunn's heels, had prudently allowed his "lookout," to pass through the gate into the alley in front of him. He himself had lingered for a moment, so that Dunn might prove for him whether or not the coast was clear.

At first sound of the scuffle, Sam had darted back from the half-closed gate and across the yard through the rear doorway of the tumbledown house that adjoined his own.

Always prepared for emergencies he had snatched up his hat and coat as he had left the shop, on the approach of Lamar and the officers.

Now, in the hallway of the house he shed his apron, threw it down a coal-hole, put on the coat and hat, and very sedately walked out of the front door, just beyond the entrance to his own shop and thence down the street to the railroad yards.

Presently his route took him past a line of freight cars. When he came to an "empty," he clambered inside and shut the big reddish door behind him.

Late that night his car was coupled with thirty others and puffed out of the yard. Early next day the freight train rumbled slowly past a suburban station and on into the sand-swept waste beyond.

Sam, through a crack in his "side-door pullman," had kept rigid tabs on the train's general direction. And now he knew just where he was. He had caught a glimpse of the station's sign:

"Surftown-by-the-Sea."

A brilliant idea struck him. An idea that brought him to his feet with a bound and, tugging open the sliding door of the car, he leaped out.

"This'll be worth a dozen regular hide-out places to me," he chuckled. "Just let me find June Travis and spring the right sort of hard luck whine, and she'll help me out, all right, all right!"

Meanwhile, at Surftown, June Travis had just done what Mary characterized as "a foolish, dangerous thing, if ever there was one."

The girl had sent the following telegram to Lamar—first showing it mischievously to the scandalized and protesting Mary:

Mr. Max Lamar, 512 Blank Building:
As your assistant in "Red Circle" cases, I report monkey stolen from Italian organ grinder by girl with Red Circle on hand. Mary saw her; gives description of red hair and blue eyes. Better come down and investigate.

JUNE TRAVIS.

"You're never going to send that crazy message?" Mary gasped, as June, pausing in their morning walk, at the local telegraph office, scribbled the dispatch and laughingly showed it to her.

For reply June handed the telegram to the desk clerk.

Left alone on the veranda, later June beguiled the time for a half hour or so in jotting down notes on bits of scratch-pad paper—notes for Lamar's guidance in his hunt for the pseudo-red-haired girl with blue eyes.

Then, growing restless, she set out for a walk along the sand at the base of the cliffs, beyond the village.

June, full of the glory of the sky, strode along the beach with the tread of a young goddess.

Midway in her walk she stopped to watch a queer tableau on the shore, a few yards away from her. A young man and a girl were standing facing each other, angry of eye, sharp of voice, quarreling violently. The man was clad in blue serge, and a camera was slung from his shoulder. The woman was in white. She carried a white parasol with which she was making impatient gestures. Her sailor hat was adorned by an enormous bird of paradise plume.

At second glance June recognized the couple. They were a Mr. and Mrs. Lake, newlyweds. The bride was an old school friend of June's.

June went forward. The bride recognized her and greeted her eagerly.

"Oh, June Travis!" exclaimed the bride. "I'm so glad to see you! Harry is being perfectly abominable. What do you think he has the nerve to want me to do? He actually wants me to throw away this gorgeous bunch of paradise feathers in my hat."

"Can you blame me, Miss Travis?" put in the groom, "I belong to the Bird Protection society, and I'm not going to allow my wife to bring criticism on me."

"Mercy!" exclaimed June in mock terror. "The man who put his hand between the upper and nether mil-

stones was a sage, compared to the reckless person who interferes in a quarrel between husband and wife! This is no place for me!"

Disregarding their protests, she raced on, leaving them. She did not pause until she reached the foot of the cliffs, fully a furlong away. There she looked back. She was just in time to see Lake dig his hands deep into his trousers pockets, shrug his shoulders peevishly, and stalk away. He did not once look back, but strode on until he reached a disused boathouse farther down the beach. He walked around this and seated himself gloomily upon a keg at the side most distant from his wife.

She turned to observe the bride. Mrs. Lake had seated herself on the sands, raised her parasol and laid her hat on the beach at her side.

It was the bride who surrendered. Presently she sighed, got to her feet and, leaving the parasol and hat on the sand, began to walk slowly toward the boathouse. June watched her go—watched her until a corner of the boathouse hid her from view.

Then, as her own gaze strayed back to the place where the bride had been sitting, June was aware of a throbbing and burning at the back of her right hand. She looked down at the hand. The Red Circle glowed vividly against the snowy flesh. At the same instant, an impulse seized and mastered her.

Darting forward from the base of the cliffs, June sped to where the hat lay forgotten on the beach. A little nearer to the water was a cavity, a foot or so deep, that some child with a pail and shovel had that morning dug in the soft sand.

June picked up the hat, priceless bird of paradise plumes and all, went to the hole in the beach, thrust the hat into it and piled the sand over it.

Then she glanced furtively along the shore. The bride was still hidden from view by the boathouse. A very devil of mischief danced in June's eyes. She caught up a seashell and wrote with it on the sand these words:

"That there may be peace, the Red Circle lady has destroyed the offending hat."

She neatly traced a border around this queer message, stuck up the parasol alongside it and ran guiltily back to the shelter of the cliff.

Meanwhile, the bride, rounding the corner of the boathouse, had beheld her newly espoused lord and master

a worried look after them and a muttered excuse to Mrs. Travis, followed instantly on the curbs. June, looking in the opposite oval of mirror, saw everything.

At the almost imperceptible touch of his lips to her hair she felt her breath come and go quickly. Something strange—something terrifying yet blissfully happy—dawned all at once in her soul.

"June!" he breathed, tensely, bending over until his face was close to hers. "June! My—"

There was a step in the hallway. Mary appeared; loitering, as if without purpose, just outside the open library doors. The spell was broken. June came to herself with a start, as though from some wonderful dream.

"I am afraid it is rather late," said Lamar, forcing a commonplace tone into his agitated voice. "Good night, Miss Travis. I am glad to have been able to get back your pendant for you. And I'm sorry to have had to tell you your 'reformed' friend, Sam Eagan, is still a crook and is a fugitive from justice. Good night."

Patrolman O'Hara—newest member of Surftown's diminutive police force—was walking his beat in a disconsolate frame of mind. Patrolman O'Hara was in love. The brilliant summer moon, tonight, brought him momentary visions of the girl he wanted to marry. But common sense brought him far more clear visions of her obdurate old father who would not hear of such a marriage until Patrolman O'Hara should win promotion.

Patrolman O'Hara sighed. Luck was dodging him. That was certain. Yet he was forever looking for chances to distinguish himself. For instance, only this very evening, a circular about a famous metropolitan crook had arrived at the Surftown police station. O'Hara had read it six times. He had studied the picture of the crook's face until he felt he would know it a mile away.

Patrolman O'Hara turned a corner and came to a standstill as abruptly as if he had run into a stone wall. Fifty feet ahead of him was an all-night lunchroom—the only place on the block whose window lights were still burning.

In front of the lunchroom was a blackboard menu, setting forth the delights of various stodge dainties at a comfortably low price.

And, in the full flare of the window light, his hat pushed back on his forehead, stood a man, hungrily reading the menu.

Patrolman O'Hara had not studied that police circular for nothing. At a glance he recognized the man beside the blackboard menu. It was the crook whose rogue's gallery photograph was reproduced on the circular. It was "Smiling Sam" Eagan.

Patrolman O'Hara had visions again—this time visions of swift promotion. His chance had come! He stepped forward.

At sight of him Eagan wheeled and began to shuffle away into the comparative darkness of the moonlit street. That was quite enough for Patrolman O'Hara. With a shout, he gave chase.

Sam, at sound of the quickened steps behind him, broke into a run. Patrolman O'Hara's last doubt vanished.

Long legs must ever win a race against short. Speedily Patrolman O'Hara gained upon his quarry, as Sam dashed aimlessly up one street and down another. Presently he was almost within an arm's length of the puffing fugitive. Another ten seconds and his hand would be on Eagan's collar.

"Halt!" bawled O'Hara. "Halt, or I'll shoot!"

Sam turned in at the entrance of an alley and with a final spurt of speed ran up the alleyway. O'Hara close behind. The policeman's finger was on the trigger. He lacked the patience to run his winded man down. Instead, he made good his threat by firing again. Purposely he aimed high, but he was no marksman, and the effect of his bullet filled him with the wildest consternation.

For "Smiling Sam" swerved sharply in his run, gave a coughing cry, staggered forward upon his knees, half rose, then tumbled prone upon his face in the mud of the alley.

"Good Lord!" groaned Patrolman O'Hara, suddenly unnerved and shaken with nausea. "I've killed him! I've—I've murdered a man!"

He stuck the pistol into his belt and went forward to where the inert body lay. Hesitatingly he turned the huge, lifeless bulk over on its back and stopped to feel the heart.

And in the very same moment the murdered man came to life.

Patrolman O'Hara felt himself clutched by a sinewy, thick hand, whose fingers dug deep into his throat. Eagan, with his other hand, wrenched the pistol from O'Hara's belt and transferred it to his own pocket. Then, with both hands and arms and legs, he proceeded to grip the dumfounded officer and lay him flat and helpless on his back.

In a few seconds Eagan was standing above his beaten opponent, pistol leveled.

"Get up!" commanded Eagan, menacing him with the revolver. "So! Now just you run around that corner, Mr. Officer, and run around it double quick! Run, and keep on running!"

Patrolman O'Hara, in sudden fright, did as he was bidden. He bolted down the alleyway.

Eagan set off in the opposite direction to that taken by Patrolman O'Hara. Clearly there was no time to squander in dreamy idleness. O'Hara, at the alley's mouth, collided with a man who was walking along the street from the beach. The officer, as he reeled back from the collision, recognized Max Lamar—the great crime

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specialist, who had been pointed out to him one day in the city. "Quick!" gurgled O'Hara, pointing up the alley. "Smiling Sam Eagan's there. He got my gun and—"

Lamar did not wait for the rest of the sorry confession. At a bound he was in the alley. At its far end the moonlight showed him the squat body of Eagan vanishing around a house corner.

"Halt!" shouted Lamar, drawing his revolver and pursuing with all the skilled speed of a college sprinter.

Around the alley corner he ran. Eagan, a bare thirty yards ahead, heard him coming. Halting, Sam hid himself behind the jutting edge of a house and fired. The bullet flew wide.

Lamar answered with two shots. One bullet grazed Sam's ear. The other flattened itself against a stone just above his head.

Sam, steadying his arm against the house-edge, fired again. This time his

shot found a mark, but not that at which he had fired. Patrolman O'Hara, charging along the alley to re-enforce Lamar, was so unfortunate as to catch the ball in the calf of the leg. He sprawled headlong.

Most decidedly this was not O'Hara's lucky night.

Sam, aiming with better judgment, pulled the trigger again. The hammer fell with a click upon an exploded cartridge. The pistol was empty. Throwing it away, he took to his heels.

Lamar followed at racing speed, halting only now and then to fire.

Up the alley came a second patrolman and several civilians. They halted at sight of the wounded O'Hara. The latter raised himself on his hands, stammered out the gist of the story, pointed in the direction whither Lamar and Eagan had disappeared, then slumped to earth in a dead faint.

The hue and cry reached the street at the alley's far end, looked up and down, saw no one in either direction, then ran valiantly to westward. Lamar and his quarry had turned east.

Lamar, more than once, in the vague moonlight and black shadows, missed sight of the man he followed. Once he completely lost him, and was about to give up the chase, when a glimpse of something black, silhouetted against the skyline and moving heavily, like a wounded bull, set him off in hot chase again.

By this time they had left the village behind them. Sam, running with no sense of direction, found himself at the shoreward base of the ridge that culminated in the ocean-side cliffs.

Up the ridge he scrambled, grunting and heaving with fatigue. It was then that Lamar, two hundred yards behind, caught sight of the broad, squat body against the skyline.

Up the ridge toiled Eagan, seeking some cavern or rift of rock wherein to hide until morning. Ever upward he worked his way.

Clambering as nimbly as a cat, Lamar swarmed up the steep slope behind him. Once only he paused. That was when Sam, gaining the summit, halted and stared dazedly around. Lamar, resting his pistol barrel on a ledge of rock, pulled trigger. The revolver was empty. He dropped it and continued his swift climb.

Sam, gradually recovering his breath, heard a stone rattle just beneath him. He wheeled about, as Lamar bounded up to the flat summit-rock behind him.

No word was spoken. Breath was too scant and too precious for that. The two men sprang at each other.

Unarmed, forced to rely on nature's primal weapons, they came together with a thudding shock that sent them both to the ground.

Gripping each other in murderous fury, they regained their feet, and, on the slippery edge of the cliff, with a sheer drop of 300 feet to the sea that thundered below them, they fought.

To and fro they reeled, on the perilous verge of the precipice—there, on the black cliff in the white moonlight. Hitting, wrestling, struggling, they battled, tiny specks of living and vibrant hatred suspended between sea and sky.

Inch by inch Sam began to drag his lighter foe toward the brink of the precipice.

(END OF EIGHTH INSTALLMENT.)

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Lamar, more than once, in the vague moonlight and black shadows, missed sight of the man he followed. Once he completely lost him, and was about to give up the chase, when a glimpse of something black, silhouetted against the skyline and moving heavily, like a wounded bull, set him off in hot chase again.

By this time they had left the village behind them. Sam, running with no sense of direction, found himself at the shoreward base of the ridge that culminated in the ocean-side cliffs.

Up the ridge he scrambled, grunting and heaving with fatigue. It was then that Lamar, two hundred yards behind, caught sight of the broad, squat body against the skyline.

Up the ridge toiled Eagan, seeking some cavern or rift of rock wherein to hide until morning. Ever upward he worked his way.

Clambering as nimbly as a cat, Lamar swarmed up the steep slope behind him. Once only he paused. That was when Sam, gaining the summit, halted and stared dazedly around. Lamar, resting his pistol barrel on a ledge of rock, pulled trigger. The revolver was empty. He dropped it and continued his swift climb.

Sam, gradually recovering his breath, heard a stone rattle just beneath him. He wheeled about, as Lamar bounded up to the flat summit-rock behind him.

No word was spoken. Breath was too scant and too precious for that. The two men sprang at each other.

Unarmed, forced to rely on nature's primal weapons, they came together with a thudding shock that sent them both to the ground.

Gripping each other in murderous fury, they regained their feet, and, on the slippery edge of the cliff, with a sheer drop of 300 feet to the sea that thundered below them, they fought.

To and fro they reeled, on the perilous verge of the precipice—there, on the black cliff in the white moonlight. Hitting, wrestling, struggling, they battled, tiny specks of living and vibrant hatred suspended between sea and sky.

Inch by inch Sam began to drag his lighter foe toward the brink of the precipice.

(END OF EIGHTH INSTALLMENT.)



She Felt Her Breath Come and Go Quickly.



Nature's Pitying Hand Had Sponged Out the Tell-Tale Handwriting.

THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar, June, dressed as a boy, recovers Mary's coat from the police. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. At the seaside June steals war invention plans from Todd Drew and sinks them in the sea with her boy's clothes. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle paints the Red Circle on her hand and robs the guests at a ball. Mary sees her wash off the mark and points her out to Lamar who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after "Smiling Sam." On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat.

NINTH INSTALLMENT "DODGING THE LAW"

The beach comber was shuffling along the sands, like some furtively uncouth night animal. He was a forlorn spectacle—unshaven, ill clad. For a week, now, he had dwelt in a tumble-down shack at the far end of Surftown beach.

Only after dark did he venture forth in search of food or firewood. The few people who had seen him on these night prowls thought him a mere tramp and nicknamed him "Mike."

This evening Mike was scouring the shore for driftwood. His gaze was caught and gripped by something that swayed and reeled eccentrically on the verge of the cliff, far above him.

He looked more closely. There, silhouetted against the brightness of the midnight sky, he could make out two close-locked bodies, fighting for very life on the cliff edge.

Mike stared upward, spellbound. Then he shouted. The night wind carried away his cry of warning. Galvanized into feverish activity, he cast aside his carefully hoarded armful of wood and ran to the base of the cliff.

Forgetful of his own safety, Mike began to swarm up the steep trail, toward the summit.

Max Lamar was yielding, inch by inch, to the fearful pressure of his foe. With every ounce of his 240



Slowly They Set Off Toward the Hotel.

pounds, and with every atom of his mighty strength, "Smiling Sam" Eagan was striving to drag Lamar to the cliff brink and hurl him over.

Max realized his enemy's intent, and fought like a wildcat to overcome the terrible handicap of weight. He wrenched one arm free and struck. His left fist battered thuddingly against the sweating flesh of Eagan's upturned face.

Eagan shifted his hold, so as to pinion the fiercely driven left arm, and twisted his broad face to one side to evade the shower of blows.

The maneuver enabled Max to tear free his right arm. Bracing himself, he threw every atom of his weight and his waning strength into a short-arm uppercut. His fist caught Sam at the point of the jaw.

Eagan's mighty arms relaxed their hold under the impact of the blow. Before he could brace himself, Lamar struck again. Eagan reeled backward, dizzy and all but helpless. With boxer's intuition, Max knew a third blow would end the fight. He braced his feet to deliver it, throwing his right foot several inches behind the left.

The right foot did not touch ground. Instead, it swung out into space. For Lamar was on the very edge of the precipice. Understanding his peril, he flung himself forward.

The movement caused a cave-in of the crumbling verge, beneath his right foot. He threw out his arms to save himself. But it was too late to recover his balance. Over the edge his body crashed.

Sam, his brain clearing from the

jar of the two jaw-blows, lurched forward to peer down at his vanished foe. But at the first uncertain step, he paused. Over the side of the cliff, some ten feet beyond, appeared the head and shoulders of a man. A moment later the lean body of Mike scrambled to its feet on the summit.

Panting and exhausted from his steep climb, the beach comber moved forward uncertainly. Sam, seeing him approach, fancied the whole man hunt was upon him, and that a dozen or more pursuers might be at hand. He snarled like a wild beast cornered. With one smash of his beefy fist he knocked the panting beach comber half senseless to the ground; then made off at top speed along the summit of the bluff.

As Mike blinked uncertainly about him, he heard a muffled cry that seemed to come from the ground beneath his feet. He jumped to one side, in superstitious dread.

"Who's—who's there?" he mumbled.

Six feet below him, and hanging over a sheer three-hundred foot drop, clung a man—a man who had broken his fall by seizing an outcropping jut of stone.

To the stone the unfortunate Lamar was clinging with both hands.

Mike drew back from the edge, yanked off his ragged coat, twisted it, ropewise, and tied one end firmly around his thin waist. He wound both his spindling legs around an upcropping rock near the edge and once more leaned over.

The collar of the coat brushed against Lamar's face. Max seized it. The weight nearly tore the tramp loose from his impromptu anchorage. But he set his teeth and hauled upward.

After what seemed a century of agonized effort, Max rolled over the edge on to the crisp grass of the summit. There, side by side, he and his rescuer lay, for a space—panting.

Max was in horrible condition. His evening clothes were torn to ribbons. His face was bloodstained and bruised. His palms were raw and bleeding.

"Where shall I take you?" asked the beach comber.

"To the Surftown hotel, please," answered Max, "if you can."

Slowly, Lamar leaning heavily on his new-found friend, they set off toward the hotel. Ten minutes later, they were in Max's own room; and Mike was easing the injured man carefully down into a chair. As he did so, their eyes met full in the glare of the electric light above them.

The beach comber started violently; his pallid face turned battleship color. He turned and made as though to leave the room.

"Wait!" panted Lamar. "I can't let you go like this, old man. You've done me a mighty big service—bigger than I can ever repay. What can I do for you in return?"

"Nothing at all, Mr. Lamar," was the beach comber's reply. "I'm glad to have been of service to you."

"You know my name!" ejaculated Lamar.

"I—I have seen you several times," evaded the other.

"If you won't let me try to repay you now," urged Lamar, "at least let me be of use to you if ever you need help. Here."

Shakily, he drew out one of his cards, from his torn vest pocket, scrawled a word or two on it and handed it to Mike. The latter took the card, pocketed it and—uneasy under the increasing curiosity in Max's gaze—shuffled hurriedly from the room.

Lamar stared after him; bewildered momentarily making him forget his pain and fatigue.

"I know I've seen him before," he murmured aloud. "But where and when? It wasn't with that tall white face and hunted look and two-weeks' stubble of beard. I know that. But—but—who is he?"

The morning sun was blazing on the waves and turning Surftown beach into a vista of glittering silver.

From a half-hidden cave-mouth near the base of the bluffs peered forth a puffy and bruised face.

"Smiling Sam" Eagan had blundered upon this cave in the course of his fight, after his battle with Lamar.

He looked up and down the gleaming beach, wondering if he might dare venture forth to appease his goading hunger, but, even as he took a step forward, he halted and shrank back again.

Along the shore, a 'urling distant, two men were strolling, and to Sam's keen eyes their faces were clearly visible.

"Jacobs!" he sputtered wrathfully. "And Boyle! The two fly central office detectives that used to work with Lamar. Gee! The police haven't wasted much time in hitting my trail."

He drew back into his cave pausing only for an instant to peer down the beach in the opposite direction from that whence he had seen the two detectives. There, in the distance, two

women were sitting on a rock, in the sunshine; and toward them a man was hurrying. The man's back was toward Sam; but the watcher recognized the two women as June Travis and Mary. June and her old nurse had set forth on their morning walk along the sands and had paused at the rock to pick out a site for the picnic lunch the girl had planned for later in the day. As they sat in the sunshine, June pointed to a flat-topped bowlder, farther inshore, as an ideal natural lunch-table.

They were about to go over and investigate it when a quick step behind them in the sand made them turn. Max Lamar was coming toward them. Mary shuddered, involuntarily, and shrank back. But June, with a smile of genuine welcome, held out her hand in greeting to him.

Suddenly, her arms still extended, and before her fingers could touch his, she exclaimed in quick sympathy:

"You're hurt! You're badly hurt! What is it?"

Mary, at the girl's alarmed exclamation, glanced at Lamar. His right hand was bandaged. His under lip was cut.

"What is it?" repeated June, anxiously. "How are you hurt, Mr. Lamar? Tell me."

"That?" said Lamar lightly, as he held up his bandaged hand. "Oh, that's just a little souvenir from your dear old friend, 'Smiling Sam' Eagan."

"Tell me!" urged June.

Briefly—and still treating the theme in jest rather than seriousness—Max told her the story.

"Last night, when this tramp took me home," he ended, "I was so rattled I let him get away without half thanking him."

"Excuse me, Mr. Lamar," said a voice behind Max. "They told us at the hotel that you'd started for the beach. May we interrupt you for a minute?"

Lamar got up from the rock, glancing not overfriendly at the two men who had broken in on his talk. Then as he recognized the interlopers his face cleared.

"Hello, Boyle!" he said cordially. "Hello, Jacobs! Miss Travis, will you excuse me? I shan't be long. I'll be back in five minutes."

He moved away, the two detectives walking one on either side of him.

"Sorry to butt in, Mr. Lamar. Chief's orders. Here's a letter from him. If you don't want to read all of it, I'll give you the gist now. We're down here looking for Charles Gordon—you remember? The lawyer who embezzled \$75,000 worth of Farwell corporation securities and then got away from a couple of our men? Well, we've traced him down here. Got a pretty good line on him, too. And we've run down to gather him in. Chief wants to know if you'll help us out. Not that there's any need. But—"

"Gordon!" exclaimed Max, a light of memory leaping into his face. "Gordon! Charles Gordon, the crooked lawyer! That's the man!"

"We have a tip that he's living in a hut, down below here, on the shore. Just beyond that point over there. We were on our way there and we were keeping a lookout for you at the same time. What's the matter with your hand?" he broke off.

"Your lip's cut, too," put in Boyle. "How does the other fellow look after the scrimmage? Is he in the hospital or buying a championship medal?"

"He's at large," replied Lamar, eagerly grasping the change of subject. "And he's 'Smiling Sam' Eagan."

"What?" cried both men in a breath.

"I saw him last night, and I gave chase. I caught up with him at the top of the bluff over there. We had a tussle and—"

"And what?" demanded Boyle.

"And he got away," finished Max, lamely. "Now, if you want a real capture, why not start in after Eagan?"

"Our guns are loaded for runaway lawyers," returned Jacobs—"not for Sam Eagan. When we've got Gordon neatly caught we can take a whirl at Smiling Sam."

He left them and walked hastily back to where June and Mary sat. His face was clouded and sad. June at once read the trouble in his alert eyes.

"Bad news?" she asked.

"The worst sort of bad news—for me," he made worried answer. "And for the 'tramp' who saved my life. The 'tramp,' by the way, is Charles Gordon an embezzling lawyer. He's in hiding here. Those two men are central office detectives and—"

"They are looking for him?" queried June, excited. "They've traced him to Surftown?"

"Worse. They've traced him to his hut. They're on the way there. At least, they were. See, they're starting back, now, to meet a boy who is going to guide them. And—Chief Allen writes asking me to help them. I—"

"But," urged June, "you can't. You can't! Why, he saved your life. He—"

"Do you suppose I've forgotten that?" retorted Lamar, miserably. "That's why I tried to delay them. I'd give my left arm to be able to get there ahead of them and warn him. But how can I? I'm a sworn officer of the law and—"

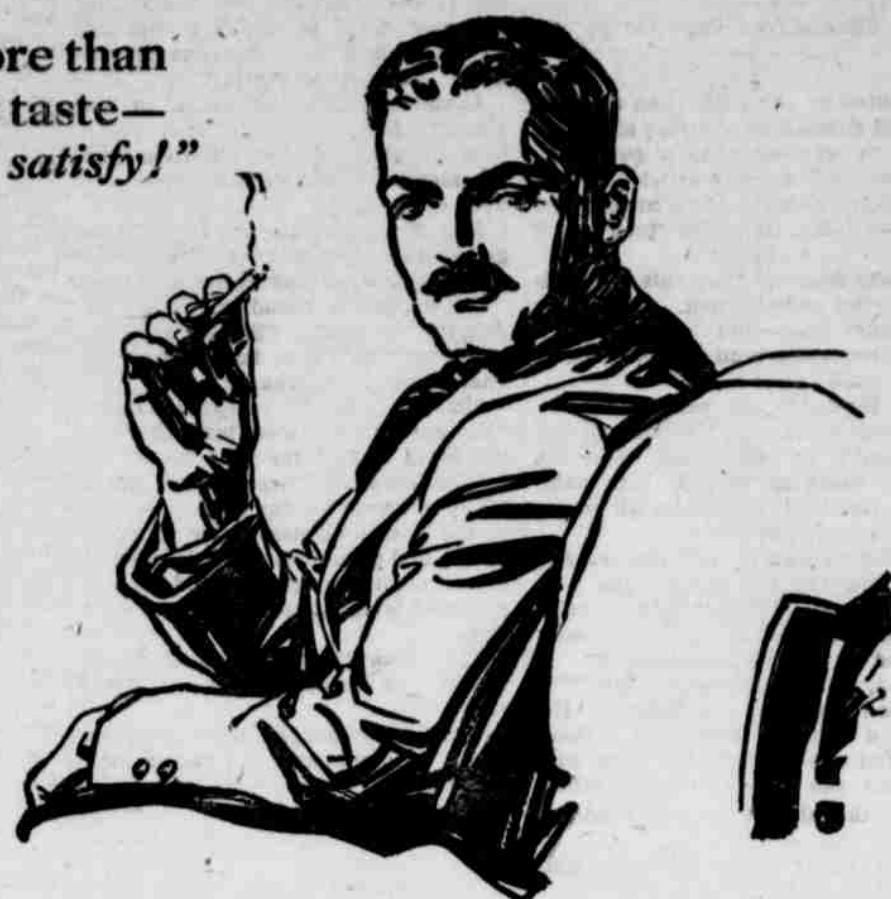
"But I'm not!" cried June, springing to her feet. "And I'm going to warn him!"

Around the headland she vanished, just as the two detectives met the boy who was to guide them and started off at a fast walk toward the point. They did not see June. But she, glancing over her shoulder as she rounded the headland, saw them advancing. And she quickened her own run.

Before her was the shack—closed, seemingly deserted. She reached it in a few seconds. She noted that while the door was apparently locked a window at the rear was not. With-

(Continued on Next Page)

"They do more than
please your taste—
they satisfy!"



That's why Chesterfields are like a good cup of coffee—they taste fine and, in addition, they satisfy!

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Chesterfield is the one cigarette that can give you this new delight (satisfy, yet mild), because no cigarette maker can copy the Chesterfield blend—an entirely new combination of tobaccos and the greatest advance in cigarette blending in 20 years.

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Must be not less than 5 in. diameter and 49 in. length. HEMLOCK, Spruce, Balsam and Cedar. Hemlock Bolts must be separate.

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QUIT MEAT IF YOUR KIDNEYS ACT BADLY

Take tablespoonful of Salts if Back hurts or Bladder bothers—Drink lots of water.

We are a nation of meat eaters and our blood is filled with uric acid, says a well-known authority, who warns us to be constantly on guard against kidney trouble.

The kidneys do their utmost to free the blood of this irritating acid, but become weak from the overwork; they get sluggish; the eliminative tissues clog and thus the waste is retained in the blood to poison the entire system.

When your kidneys ache and feel like lumps of lead, and you have stinging pains in the back or the urine is cloudy, full of sediment, or the bladder is irritable, obliging you to seek relief during the night; when you have severe headaches, nervous and dizzy spells, sleeplessness, acid stomach or rheumatism in bad weather, get from your pharmacist about four ounces of Jad Salts; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast each morning and in a few days your kidneys will act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to flush and stimulate clogged kidneys, to neutralize the acids in urine so it is no longer a source of irritation, thus ending urinary and bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is inexpensive and cannot injure; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink, and nobody can make a mistake by taking a little occasionally to keep the kidneys clean and active.

BABY HAD WHOOPING COUGH

Mrs. Sam C. Small, Clayton, N. M. writes: "My grandson had whooping cough when he was three months old. We used Foley's Honey and Tar and I believe it saved his life. He is now big and fat." Foley's Honey and Tar is a fine thing to have in the house for whooping cough, croup, coughs, colds.

The fool with money to burn may drive an ash cart in after years.

When the star boarder marries his landlady he becomes a fixed star.

Two women like to start a fuss and then leave their husbands to fight it out.

DRINK HOT TEA —FOR A BAD COLD

Get a small package of Hamburg Breast Tea, or as the German folks call it, "Hamburger Brust Tee," at any pharmacy. Take a tablespoonful of the tea, put a cup of boiling water upon it, pour through a sieve and drink a teaspoon full at any time during the day or before retiring. It is the most effective way to break a cold and cure grip, as it opens the pores of the skin, relieving congestion. Also loosens the bowels, thus driving a cold from the system.

Try it the next time you suffer from a cold or the grip. It is inexpensive and entirely vegetable, therefore safe and harmless.

RUB BACKACHE AND LUMBAGO RIGHT OUT

Rub Pain and Stiffness away with a small bottle of old honest St. Jacobs Oil

When your back is sore and lame or lumbago, sciatica or rheumatism has you stiffened up, don't suffer! Get a 25 cent bottle of old, honest "St. Jacobs Oil" at any drug store, pour a little in your hand and rub it right into the pain or ache, and by the time you count fifty, the soreness and lameness is gone.

Don't stay crippled! This soothing, penetrating oil needs to be used only once. It takes the ache and pain right out of your back and ends the misery. It is magical, yet absolutely harmless and doesn't burn the skin.

Nothing else stops lumbago, sciatica and lame back misery so promptly!

"The Red Circle"

(Continued from Page Three)

out nestation, she hung open the window and climbed on over the sill.

June found herself in a cubbyhole of a room whose only articles of furniture were a tumbledown cot bed and a rickety table, on which stood an oil lamp.

A crazy door led from this tiny bedroom to the room beyond. June threw wide the door—and confronted a scared, cowering man, who blinked at her in dumb terror.

"Mr. Gordon!" she said, incisively, as if talking to a delirium victim. "The police are after you. Get out of that bedroom window and make for the rocks. I'll hold them till you're out of reach. Go!"

She seized him by the arm, as she spoke, drawing him toward the window. As she did so, a thunderous knocking sounded at the outer door followed by a sharp summons of:

"Open, in the name of the law!"

Gordon hesitated no longer. He bent and kissed June's hand. Then, he bolted out through the rear window and ran like a chased rabbit toward the shelter of the headland rocks.

"He'll never make it," she muttered, "unless—"

She slammed shut the door leading from the bedroom to the front room. Picking up one of a handful of scattered matches on the bedroom table, she lighted the dirty little kerosene lamp.

At the same moment the two detectives burst open the outer door and piled into the front room. There, for a second, they halted in wonder. Before them was the slightly open door of the bedroom. Through the crack between door jamb and doorway, appeared a white hand—a woman's hand—and part of an arm.

The hand grasped a burning kerosene lamp whose smoky chimney wobbled dangerously. Yes, and on the back of the white hand shone a circle of scarlet.

"The Red Circle!" ejaculated Boyle; and started forward—a human bound upon the scent.

"Back!" shrieked a woman's voice from behind the half-shut door—a voice that echoed through the bare shack like a silver bugle's call. "Back! If you take another step forward I'll throw this lamp."

"Rush her!" yelled Boyle. "We'll get 'em both. Gordon and the Red Circle woman! Rush her!"

He bounded forward as he spoke, Jacobs at his heels. And, across the little room, like a flaming meteor, whizzed the lamp.

The blazing lamp crashed to the floor at Jacob's feet. There was a flare, an explosion, and the room was thick with blinding smoke.

Jacobs reeled back, gasping; his lungs bursting agonized with the kerosene fumes he had swallowed. He fell prostrate across the wooden flooring which the burning kerosene had already begun to ignite.

Boyle stooped and groped through the smoke for the swooning man, found him and dragged him through the choking fumes to the outer door.

Meanwhile, as soon as she had launched the lamp at her antagonists, June had wheeled about and leaped through the bedroom window.



Lamar's Gaze Was Fixed on Her Own Right Hand.

While Boyle was seeking to get Jacobs out of the burning shack, she was speeding along the sand toward the rock where she had left Lamar and Mary.

Gordon, too, had profited mightily by her delay. From the rocks he made his way to the highroad that led from Surfont to the city. An auto truck, city-bound, chugged past, just as he reached the road. With a lithe spring, he swung himself up to a precarious seat at its tailboard.

As she ran, June looked backward. The shack was a pillar of flame.

Presently, as she rounded the point, she dropped to a sedate walk. Mary and Lamar were coming forward from the rock, to meet her. She forced her labored breathing into some sort of regularity and answered the eager question in their eyes by calling out to them:

"I was too late. He had gotten away. But I saw the detectives going toward the shack. It seemed to be on fire—or something."

"A fire?" echoed Lamar, looking toward the smudge of smoke that began to crawl upward over the jutting shoulder of the point. "I should say so. And, look how everyone is running! Let's go to see it."

Lamar reached the scene of the blaze to find a crowd already there. The fire shared public attention with two men, one of whom held the other's head on his knee.

Max shouldered his way through the group that hemmed in these two. Boyle looked up and recognized him.

"He's coming 'round, all right, Mr. Lamar," he said. "Smoke was too much for him. Gee, but we had one queer time in that shack!"

"In the shack?" repeated Lamar. "You surely never went into that blazing hovel to look for your man?"

"We sure did," responded Boyle. "Only it wasn't blazing then. We bust in the door and started for an inner door. And then a woman's hand stuck out through the opening and—it had a lighted lamp. Threw the lamp at us and—"

"A woman?" questioned the amazed Lamar. "A woman—threw a lamp at you?"

"It was a woman, all right," insisted Boyle. "No man ever had such a little white hand. Besides—"

"Besides," gasped Jacobs feebly, "the hand had a Red Circle on the back."

"No!" gasped Lamar, dumfounded, incredulous. "No! It couldn't have been! Not—"

"It was, though," declared Boyle. "We both saw it. We—"

"Miss Travis!" broke in Lamar, as he caught sight of June, who had just come up. "Do you hear this? These men say a woman was in that shack—that she threw a lamp at them—that there was a Red Circle on her hand."

"No, really?" exclaimed June. "A woman—with the Red Circle?"

She checked herself abruptly. Lamar's gaze was fixed on her own right hand, carelessly displayed to his view. Her guilty glance fell to the back of her hand. It was snowy, velvety, shapely. No sign of the Red Circle was visible on its smooth surface.

"Can—can you explain it?" she faltered. "Can you explain how a woman—with the Red Circle—could have—?"

"No," he said brusquely, as he fought to shake off a feeling of strange mistrust that encompassed him. "No, I can't. I—I can't!"

Then, with an effort, changing the subject, he went on:

"My letter from Chief Allen begs me to come back to town and consult with him on the Gordon case. I must catch the noon train, if I can. Good-by."

Abruptly he turned away, ignoring the girl's pretty gesture of farewell.

Mrs. Travis came down to the beach, at noontide, in her car. On the front seat, beside the chauffeur, rode Yama. The tonneau was half filled with hampers and baskets.

From the table boulder they had chosen for their luncheon board earlier in the morning June and Mary waved to Mrs. Travis.

"Here," directed June, as the Jap came plodding up, "here is the rock. Yama. Spread the lunch there, and put the car cushions on those rows of stones to each side. Call us when you're ready. And be ready as soon as you can. I'm starved. Mrs. Travis wants to see where the fire was this morning. We will be back in five minutes. Try to have everything on the

table by that time."

The three women strolled away. Yama, as they left him, set to work with a will to get the luncheon ready within the brief five minutes allotted him.

As the Jap was not gifted with eyes in his back, he did not see a frowny head emerge from a cave-mouth in the lower part of the bluff, a few yards behind him.

Sam Eagan had tried to sleep his hunger away, until such time as it might be safe to venture out on the open beach without fear of meeting the police. Suddenly his nostrils had been tickled by the smell of food.

Then, at once, his whole starved system clamored ravenously for something to eat. His craving for food had redoubled since morning. Now it drove away caution and common sense. He must eat, though he go to prison for life, in payment for his meal.

Eagan thrust out his head from the cave. He saw Mrs. Travis walking away with June and Mary. He saw

just below him a dapper little Jap engaged in setting a picnic table. He saw—heavenly sight!—a great basket of food just behind the busy Jap.

No hale man who has gone hungry for thirty hours will blame the fugitive for laying aside his armor of prudence at sight and smell of the feast that filled the big lunch basket.

Noiselessly he crept from his hiding place. On tiptoe he made his way toward the table. Yama was stooping forward, arranging a handful of silver at one of the three plates.

Sam leaned over him, and with lightning motion caught up the edges of the tablecloth and swathed the Jap's meager body in them.

Knotting the cloth-ends firmly behind the back of the squealing and vainly struggling little butler, Sam made a rush for the food basket, snatched it up and bounded lumberingly off among the rocks, seeking a safe place where he might hide and devour his fragrant prize.

Eagan had sense enough not to go back to his cave with his plunder. That was much too near the scene of his theft. Possible searchers would see the cavern-mouth and explore it. He must get far enough away to dodge pursuit, before settling down to the delights of his stolen banquet.

Ahead of him was a hillock made up of broken boulders in whose niches a man could elude a whole cordon of police. And toward this hillock, Eagan ran.

His way took him along a rocky bit of beach, where he most needs jump from stone to stone. The tide was in. The water swirled thirstily among the rocks as he rushed onward.

He came to a place where he could not stride from boulder to boulder to

boulder, but must jump from one to the next. He gathered himself for the leap, and he made it in safety. But the rock on which his two hundred and forty pounds landed was slimy with wet sea moss.

Sam's feet slipped. Instinctively, he threw out both arms to steady himself. The basket of food slipped from his outflung arms, struck the rock and caromed off into three feet of water; where a mischievous wave promptly washed it out of sight.

Droop-jawed, goggled-eyed, Sam watched his treasure vanish. For a moment, he was dumb. Then came a rush of words. Up and down on the slippery rock, Sam Eagan danced. He threw his fists aloft. He cursed in a way that would have been a liberal education to an audience of longshoremen and lumberjacks and canal-boat men.

At last, his vocabulary and his voice failed him. And he tried to remember whether or not there had been more than one basket of food in that picnic lunch. On careful and ravenous reflection, he rather thought there had been a second basket. And he turned hungrily back toward the spot he had so nimbly quitted a few minutes earlier.

Yama, meantime, had at last freed himself of his tablecloth winding-sheet, clearing away the last folds of it from his head and face, just as the three women returned. Loudly and dramatically, he told them what had befallen him. And, at discovery that the food basket was gone, his voluble indignation redoubled.

"Someone has played a silly practical joke on you," decided Mrs. Travis. "I am going to the coastguard station below here to ask if anyone there did it. Yama," she continued, "Go back to the car, and ask if Gavroche saw anybody run in that direction with the basket."

Left alone, June and Mary stared at each other in dumb astonishment. Then, all at once, the funny side of the mishap struck June. She threw back her head and laughed.

The daring cleverness of the thief appealed to the newly awakened criminality in her nature. And, as she laughed, the Red Circle began to throb and glow on the back of her hand.

Sam Eagan, having crawled as near as he dared, to the spot where he still hoped to find food, caught sight of June and heard her gay laughter. He paused, hesitant, behind a rock, debating whether or not it would be safe to come out and throw himself upon her mercy.

He had half-coined a whining speech of penitence for her benefit, when, of a sudden, the girl clapped her right hand across her mouth to stop her hysterical laugh.

Clear as noontide sun could make it, the scarlet sign on her hand-back flashed forth.

He Set His Teeth and Hauled Upward,

boulder, but must jump from one to the next. He gathered himself for the leap, and he made it in safety. But the rock on which his two hundred and forty pounds landed was slimy with wet sea moss.

Sam's feet slipped. Instinctively, he threw out both arms to steady himself. The basket of food slipped from his outflung arms, struck the rock and caromed off into three feet of water; where a mischievous wave promptly washed it out of sight.

Droop-jawed, goggled-eyed, Sam watched his treasure vanish. For a moment, he was dumb. Then came a rush of words. Up and down on the slippery rock, Sam Eagan danced. He threw his fists aloft. He cursed in a way that would have been a liberal education to an audience of longshoremen and lumberjacks and canal-boat men.

At last, his vocabulary and his voice failed him. And he tried to remember whether or not there had been more than one basket of food in that picnic lunch. On careful and ravenous reflection, he rather thought there had been a second basket. And he turned hungrily back toward the spot he had so nimbly quitted a few minutes earlier.

Yama, meantime, had at last freed himself of his tablecloth winding-sheet, clearing away the last folds of it from his head and face, just as the three women returned. Loudly and dramatically, he told them what had befallen him. And, at discovery that the food basket was gone, his voluble indignation redoubled.

"Someone has played a silly practical joke on you," decided Mrs. Travis. "I am going to the coastguard station below here to ask if anyone there did it. Yama," she continued, "Go back to the car, and ask if Gavroche saw anybody run in that direction with the basket."

Left alone, June and Mary stared at each other in dumb astonishment. Then, all at once, the funny side of the mishap struck June. She threw back her head and laughed.

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Clear as noontide sun could make it, the scarlet sign on her hand-back flashed forth.

Snow! Snow! Beautiful Snow. The Winter Is Here

and we are here with a stock of warm clothing and footwear for the entire family at prices that will reach the purse of every economical shopper.

THE LEADER stands for "We Lead in Economy and Quality."

These are only a few of the many Bargains to be seen at **THE LEADER** Now:—

Men's best \$1.00 first quality Rubbers at **59c** pair.

Men's best quality four-buckle Arctics **\$2.19** pair.

Men's good quality one-buckle Arctics **\$1.19** pair.

Ladies two-buckle heavy and medium weight Arctics **\$1.39** pair.

Men's extra heavy red rolled sole pure gum Rubbers, \$1.50 values, **\$1.19**.

Misses and childrens high legging and arctics attached, also four-buckle arctics, a bargain, **\$1.29** pair.

One lot of men's 8-in top felt Shoes, sheepskin lined, with felt or leather soles, \$3.50 values with or without rubber heels, **\$2.48** pair.

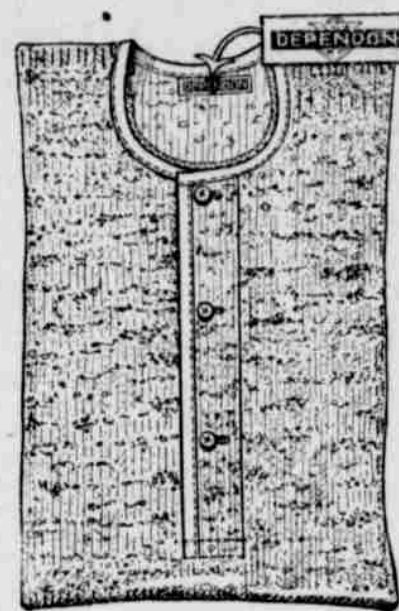
One lot of men's German Socks, all wool and extra heavy, best \$1.25 values **75c** pair.

One lot of boy's German Socks, heavy tufted lined 75c value, **43c** pair.

One lot of men's Mackinaw lined duck Coats, special, **\$1.29** each.

Men's extra heavy corduroy Coats, Mackinaw lined, with high storm collars, good \$3.50 value, **\$2.69**.

One lot of men's heavy wool Pants, \$2.50 values for **\$1.79** pair.



Men's extra heavy fleeced Union Suits \$1.25 value, **89c** each.

We carry a full line of mens and boys Soo wool Mackinaws, Pants, Shirts and Jumpers, prices always a little less.

THE LEADER

H. ROSENTHAL, Prop'r.

Madison Block, Main-St., East Jordan

"The—the Red Circle!" gurgled Eagan, in stark amaze, "The—the Red Circle!—June Travis!"

A gleam of wolfish cunning began to replace the blank wonder on his face.

(END OF NINTH INSTALLMENT.)

SEVERE BRONCHIAL COLD

Yields To Delicious Vinol

Philadelphia, Pa.—"Last fall I was troubled with a very severe bronchial cold, headaches, backache, and sick to my stomach. I was so bad I became alarmed and tried several medicines also a doctor, but did not get any relief. A friend asked me to try Vinol and it brought the relief which I craved, so now I am enjoying perfect health."—JACK C. SINGLETON.

We guarantee Vinol for chronic coughs, colds and bronchitis.

Sold by East Jordan Drug Co.

Bravery is reckoned by what we do, not by what we threaten.

He who borrows money of a relative never hears the last of it.

Fortunate is the man whose tastes are similar to those of his cook.

NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS

Foley Cathartic Tablets are just a plain, honest, old-fashioned physic. They act promptly and effectively on the bowels without pain, griping or nausea. They keep the stomach sweet the liver active, and the bowels regular. They banish biliousness, sick headaches, sour stomach, indigestion.—Hite's Drug Store.

A man with a small mind seldom has occasion to change it.

Coffee is a bad thing for a man's temper—especially if his wife doesn't know how to make it.

THIS—AND FIVE CENTS!

DON'T MISS THIS. Cut out this slip, enclose five cents to Foley & Co. 2835 Sheffield Ave., Chicago, Ill., writing your name and address clearly. You will receive in return a trial package containing Foley's Honey and Tar Compound for coughs, colds and croup; Foley Kidney Pills, and Foley Cathartic Tablets.—Hite's Drug Store.



PUT CREAM IN NOSE AND STOP CATARRH

Tells How To Open Clogged Nostrils and End Head-Colds.

You feel fine in a few moments. Your cold in head or catarrh will be gone. Your clogged nostrils will open. The air passages of your head will clear and you can breathe freely. No more dullness, headache; no hawking, snuffling, mucous discharges or dryness; no struggling for breath at night.

Tell your druggist you want a small bottle of Ely's Cream Balm. Apply a little of this fragrant, antiseptic cream in your nostrils, let it seep through every air passage of the head; soothe and heal the swollen, inflamed mucous membrane, and relief comes instantly. It is just what every cold and catarrh sufferer needs. Don't stay stuffed-up and miserable.

A jeweler says pearls are like women—they require a lot of attention.

It's easier to approach luxuries than it is to back away from them again.

Marriage is seldom a failure if neither party to the contract has any relations to interfere.

Jump from Bed in Morning and Drink Hot Water

Tells why everyone should drink hot water each morning before breakfast.

Why is man and woman, half the time, feeling nervous, despondent, worried; some days headachy, dull and unstrung; some days really incapacitated by illness.

If we all would practice inside-bathing, what a gratifying change would take place. Instead of thousands of half-sick, anemic-looking souls with nasty, muddy complexions we should see crowds of happy, healthy, rosy cheeked people everywhere. The reason is that the human system does not rid itself each day of all the waste which it accumulates under our present mode of living. For every ounce of food and drink taken into the system nearly an ounce of waste material must be carried out, else it ferments and forms ptomaine-like poisons which are absorbed into the blood.

Just as necessary as it is to clean the ashes from the furnace each day, before the fire will burn bright and hot, so we must each morning clear the inside organs of the previous day's accumulation of indigestible waste and body toxins. Men and women, whether sick or well, are advised to drink each morning, before breakfast, a glass of real hot water with a teaspoonful of limestone phosphate in it, as a harmless means of washing out of the stomach, liver, kidneys and bowels the indigestible material, waste, sour bile and toxins; thus cleansing, sweetening and purifying the entire alimentary canal before putting more food into the stomach.

Millions of people who had their turn at constipation, bilious attacks, acid stomach, nervous days and sleepless nights have become real cranks about the morning inside-bath. A quarter pound of limestone phosphate will not cost much at the drug store, but is sufficient to demonstrate to anyone, its cleansing, sweetening and freshening effect upon the system.

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle robs the guests at a ball. Mary points her out to Lamar who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after Smiling Sam. On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat. Gordon, a fugitive, rescues Lamar, and June in turn saves Gordon from arrest. Smiling Sam sees the Red Circle on June's hand.

TENTH INSTALLMENT EXCESS BAGGAGE

Leaning against a rock, near the cave entrance, "Smiling Sam" rubbed a big, knotted hand over the bristly stubble on his chin.

"A Red Circle on June Travis' hand!" he muttered over and over. "How in blazes can that be? What—?"

He crept from the protection of the cavern-mouth and peered around the edge of the jutting rock, nearer to Mary and June. Their excited conversation was carried on in high-pitched tones that easily reached the hidden listener's ears.

"Of all the queer things that keep happening!" Mary was saying impatiently. "I do declare it gets on a body's nerves."

"If you let it get on your nerves," laughed June, "it's rather fun—anything mysterious is fun."

"Look!" June raised her right hand and pointed down the beach.

"Is that a man carrying a basket, or do my eyes deceive me?"

Expecting an indignant retort and receiving none at all, made her glance roguishly, from the corner of her eyes. She found Mary's horrified gaze fixed on her raised hand. The light left her face suddenly.

"Is it there?" she asked, dreading to look.

Mary took hold of the cold finger tips and pressed the marked hand against her breast.

"Yes, it's there," she answered sadly. "Well, daughter of 'Circle Jim,' what new mischief are you planning now?"

"Smiling Sam" uttered a quick, gasping sound and ducked behind the rock as the two women looked in his direction. Crouched there, gripping the smoothly worn surface for support, he grinned.

"Circle Jim!"

June Travis "Circle Jim's" child! They turned and started to walk up the beach toward the Travis cottage. "Smiling Sam" crept stealthily from behind the huge pile of rocks and looked around for possible pursuers.



"Now Lock Me In!"

suers. Finding the coast clear, he jumped boldly into the open and followed them as rapidly as he considered prudent.

As June neared the second rocky point, he called to her.

"Sam! Sam Eagan!" she gasped, clutching Mary's arm. "What does he want me for?"

By this time "Smiling Sam" was standing before them. He bowed over-courteously. When he stood erect, there was a strange light in his beady eyes.

"Sam!" June began reproachfully, "after all your promises to me! After all you—"

"What've I done, Miss Travis?" he whined.

"What have you done?" repeated June, moving a step nearer him. "Don't you feel the least bit of shame, stand-

ing there, before me, and asking me that?"

Sam threw back his head and roared aloud with genuine laughter. Mary ran to June and put her arms around her.

He stepped before them and blocked their way. Then he pointed a stubby, gray-smirched forefinger at June's lightly clasped hands.

"Not so quick!" he repeated sharply. "I've got your pedigree, and it's a peach."

Cold fear crept into June's heart. She made a spasmodic attempt to hide her hands behind her back. Sam laughed triumphantly.

"Who would 'a' thought it," he purred at her. "Miss June Travis—prison worker, savior of souls, a little angel of the cells—a crook—daughter of 'Circle Jim,' the slickest thing I ever chummed with."

"Come to the house with me!" Mary implored piteously.

"Didn't I tell you not so quick, old lady? She ain't going to the house with you and leave me cold. Get me!" he snarled.

"What do you want?" asked June, looking straight into his vicious little eyes.

"Oh, going to be nasty about it, eh? Well, now look here, you—cut it. They're after me. And 'Circle Jim's' daughter will get me food and protection, or I'll squeal good and plenty and trade her secret to the police, see?"

June shrank into Mary's arms—all her bravado gone.

"Oh, maybe ma would like to know the glad news!" he sneered. "Well, here goes."

"Stop!" June caught at his dirty, wrinkled coat sleeve. "Hide! Hide quickly, before they see you! Tonight I'll leave a basket of food for you at the corner of our garage—you know the place! Now, hide!"

Sam cast a last threatening look at the two figures in the distance, then dodged deftly behind a convenient boulder.

June swayed toward Mary.

"Your mother is coming, lamb," she warned. "She mustn't know—she mustn't suspect. Pull yourself together. And keep your hand hidden."

June nodded wearily. "I will," she said. "She won't know. I won't let her know."

"Have you found any trace of it?" Mrs. Travis called to her, a minute later.

"Not a trace. Mary and I have looked all over this part of the beach." Once inside her room June and Mary dropped pretense.

"You ought to hate me, dear," June said at last. "Your life is a misery to you now. But you must know that I wouldn't cause you sorrow or worry, if I could help it—don't you know it, Mary? When these spells come on, I—"

"There, there!" interrupted the old woman, drawing her into the circle of her arms. "Hate you? I love you better than anything in this wide world. And I'm going to stay by and shield you as long as there's life in me. Now, we won't say any more about that—ever. What we've got to think of now is this latest danger. We have to get away from Surftown, dear—right away. Tell your mother you want to go back to the city."

"I don't think it will work, but I'll try," she said meekly.

Her courage ebbed even further when she entered the library a moment later and saw the expression of impatience on her mother's usually smooth brow. Evidently the irritation of the stolen lunch had not worn off.

June went up to her chair and put her arms over her mother's shoulders. Mrs. Travis looked up. The touch was not that of impetuous June at all. It was unnaturally meek and gentle. A look at the wan face alarmed her.

"What is it—what is it, darling?" she asked hurriedly. "Do you feel ill?"

June nodded.

"Yes," she said, shuddering slightly as the thought of "Smiling Sam" came back to her. "I feel ill. Mother, I want to go home—to the city—I mean, I want to go tonight, mother."

June had worked herself up to the verge of nervous hysteria. Mrs. Travis saw, with alarm, that she was under some great mental strain.

"But I think you will get well so much more quickly down here, dear." Her determination was weakening. June felt it. It gave her new courage.

"So many queer things have happened since we've been here," Mary put in quickly. "The child's nerves have been upset for several days. She didn't want to worry you, so she hasn't said anything about it. But I've known, and it has scared me."

"Do you think it's as good for her in the city as it is here?" Mrs. Travis asked, in surprise.

"I think the best place for her, just now is the place she wants to be," said Mary quickly.

"All right. If you think it's advis-

They let you know you've been smoking—and yet they're MILD

In other words, Chesterfield Cigarettes are MILD—and yet they satisfy. This is something totally new to cigarettes. It goes further than pleasing your taste—satisfy does for your smoking what a juicy slice of hot roast beef does for your appetite.

Chesterfields satisfy—they let you know you've been smoking.

But they're MILD, too—Chesterfields are!

If you want this new cigarette delight (satisfy, yet mild) you've got to get Chesterfields, because no cigarette maker can copy the Chesterfield blend. This blend is an entirely new combination of tobaccos and the biggest discovery in cigarette blending in 20 years.

Leggett & Myers Tobacco Co.

"Give me a package of those cigarettes that SATISFY"

Chesterfield

CIGARETTES



They SATISFY!
—and yet they're
MILD

20 for 10¢

able, we'll try it, although it's very much against my will."

"And we can go this evening?" June asked eagerly.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Travis with some reluctance.

The girl jumped up from her chair and hugged her rapturously.

"Oh, I'm so glad! Thank you so much, mother dear. You'll see how quickly I get well in the city. Come on, Mary."

Upstairs, June was throwing armfuls of fluffy petticoats and dance frocks from the depths of a clothes closet, faster than Mary could pile them up on the bed.

There was a subdued knock at the door. Mary opened it. Yama stood in the hall. He had the two trunks on a small hand truck.

"Put them anywhere," June sang out, "and open them."

June's face clouded suddenly. She came close to Mary and spoke in a whisper.

"We will have dinner early tonight and we start for the city in the car right after. We have to manage to get that basket of food to Sam, Mary. I'm afraid not to. Afraid!"

"Oh, I'll arrange that all right," soothed the old nurse. "I'll have the basket fixed long before. Then right after we've finished dinner you and I can slip out on some pretext or other and put it at the side of the garage."

At seven o'clock that evening a bulky, crouching figure slid along in the shadow of the hedge skirting the Travis grounds. It made for a small gate, looked cautiously to the left and right, then darted through, toward the rear of the garage.

A huge touring car, rolled half through the open doorway, reflected the light of a low moon from its highly polished hood.

The man sneaked around in the shadows, saw and dodged back, fearful lest there might be someone in it.

He peered around the corner of the garage and grinned mockingly as he saw Mary and June steal down the steps of the little back porch and run down the driveway in his direction.

Sam crept along the outside of the garage, keeping well within the shadow. The fierce hunger that gnawed within him almost overcame his caution. As the two women drew near he darted toward them, snatched the basket from Mary's arm, and plunged an eager, dirty hand into it.

"Go out of the grounds and eat it, please!" begged June. "Someone may come at any minute."

June tried to force him around the garage.

"Say, quit pushing me!" he grumbled indignantly. "There ain't a soul here. I don't see what you're getting all fussed up about."

"I tell you, someone may come any minute."

Mary looked toward the house. A shadow crossed a lighted window. She added her entreaties to June's.

"If you expect to be fed and protected you'll have to do as we say."

"Say, you people talk like you were doing me a favor!" he observed in heavy sarcasm, "when all the time it's me that's keeping 'Circle Jim's' daughter from a little uniform and a tin cup!"

"Oh, hush, hush!" June's voice was shrill with terror. "All I ask you to do is to leave the grounds. Now will you go, or won't you?"

"Oh, well, when you're decent about it, like that, I suppose I'll go," and "Smiling Sam" allowed himself to be urged around the garage into the darkness.

He reached the rear gate, still munching. And then a thought struck him. Those two women had seemed desperately anxious to be rid of him.

A heavy step crunched the gravel of the driveway. Sam dropped into the shadow and waited. He saw the chauffeur approach the car, carrying an armful of motor robes and two heavy suitcases. He heard the thud as they were slid along the floor of the tonneau. Then there was a sudden snorting, a whir and a sharp little explosion, as the car shot forward and rolled down the drive toward the house. In the protection of the shrubbery, "Smiling Sam" groaned out a string of oaths.

Double crossed! So that was their game. Well he'd show them. He took handfuls of sandwiches from the basket and stuffed them into his groasy trouser pockets, kicked the basket outside the grounds and started for the back of the house. Then, step by step, he crept toward a long open window, from which a yellow band of light streamed out across the lawn.

Having reached it, he tried to stifle his rapid breathing. Inside there was a clink of china and tableware.

He saw Yama pick up a small carrying set and open a shallow drawer in the buffet. But before the little Jap had a chance to put the knife and work away June called to him from the hall.

Instantaneously obedient, Yama dropped the implements on the table and started for the door, where he collided with June as she ran in swathed in chiffon veils and motor coat.

"Oh, there you are!" She smiled at his evident embarrassment. "Yama, here's the key of my large trunk—the one with the trays, you know. It's so jammed full we can't close it. Will you close and lock it after we've gone? The baggage man will be here soon."

"Of a certain, Miss June," assented the grave little man.

"Thank you. Now will you come out and tuck us in the car? There's no one who can fix an automobile robe as snugly as you can, Yama. Somehow or other it always stays put."

Flattened against the house, Sam heard Mrs. Travis give final instructions about locking up the place. Then June's musical young voice called out:

(Continued on Next Page)



Dorothy Dodd
SHOES

Have You a
Dorothy Dodd Foot?

That means a foot without an ache or pain. It means a neat, trim, stylish foot.

We are making more feet comfortable and fashionable every day. We fit them scientifically and with the idea of making a customer rather than a sale.

CHAS. A. HUDSON

The cow gives her milk—but the dairyman sells it.

People who tell the truth at all times have but few friends.

When compared with the patience of a mother, all other brands of patience are counterfeit.

You can generally tell false teeth from real ones because they are more perfect than natural teeth.

BABY HAD WHOOPING COUGH

Mrs. Sam C. Small, Clayton, N. M. writes: "My grandson had whooping cough when he was three months old. We used Foley's Honey and Tar and I believe it saved his life. He is now big and fat." Foley's Honey and Tar is a fine thing to have in the house for whooping cough, croup, coughs, colds. —Hite's Drug Store.

STOP CATARRH! OPEN
NOSTRILS AND HEAD

Says Cream Applied in Nostrils
Relieves Head-Colds at Once.

If your nostrils are clogged and your head is stuffed and you can't breathe freely because of a cold or catarrh, just get a small bottle of Ely's Cream Balm at any drug store. Apply a little of this fragrant, antiseptic cream into your nostrils and let it penetrate through every air passage of your head, soothing and healing the inflamed, swollen mucous membrane and you get instant relief.

Ah! how good it feels. Your nostrils are open, your head is clear, no more hawking, sniffing, blowing; no more headache, dryness or struggling for breath. Ely's Cream Balm is just what sufferers from head colds and catarrh need. It's a delight.

We have
the New
BRETON
an
ARROW
COLLAR

WEISMAN'S

"The Red Circle"

(Continued from Third Page)

"Don't forget to give the expressman the right address, Yama."

A dull rage burned in Eagan's heart; the malignant, virulent rage of the duped crook who has never before doubted his own craft. Braving the light, the possibility of capture—everything—he stepped boldly through the open window and walked to the center of the room. His hand closed on the ugly knife lying on the table, with a savageness that was foreign to his usual suave methods.

Overhead he heard the floor respond almost imperceptibly to Yama's light steps. That must be the room the trunks were in, he decided. He bent down and crept along the floor, so that his body could not be seen from the outside.

Once, in the darkened hall, he stood erect and felt his way to the stairs. They creaked faintly under his bulky weight—too faintly to attract attention. In the upper corridor a half-opened door showed a lighted room. Yama, his back toward the door, was trying to persuade a bulging trunk that his slight weight was sufficient to end the argument. "Smiling Sam" slowly and silently opened the door. Intent upon the stubborn job before him, Yama heard nothing—sensed nothing.

Sam stood over him, brandishing the knife, snarling, swearing, threatening. The delicious fright of the little man before him fired his blood.

"Take the trays out of that trunk and dump the things in that closet over there," he commanded.

"You're going to lock me in, ship me to the city as baggage and keep your gab muzzled. If you breathe a word to anybody,"—here Sam drew an aeroplane road map with his knife—"I'll run this little lawn mower down your throat, cut out your vocal cords and string 'em on my zither! Get me? Now lock me in!"

The ashen, shaken Jap clicked the key in the lock and adjusted the straps. Downstairs, he heard the baggageman tramp up on the back porch and knock loudly on the door.

Yama led the two men back into the room and showed them the trunks. Between them they hoisted the trunk containing "Smiling Sam" and carried it downstairs.

In his office, surrounded by his stuffy old records and science books, Lamar had been struggling all day to rid himself of the vision of a pair of challenging eyes, laughing lips and a crown of adorable curls.

In utter disgust he slammed down a book on "The Defective Cerebellum," took his hat and came from the rack, and strolled over to the office of the chief of police.

The chief came out to greet him. "Hello—what's up?" he inquired tersely, at first sight of him. "Look all gone to pieces. What is it? Stomach, liver—or heart?"

"Oh, I'm worked out!" explained Max impatiently. "These 'Red Circle' cases

threshold. "Must have had a pal down there who warned him."

"And we were coming back to town, disgusted with our luck," intercepted Jacobs, "when all of a sudden I look out of the window and see this fellow Gordon, standing plumb on the sidewalk, as bold as you please. Of course Bill and I got off that car in double-quick time; but before we could steal up on him Gordon sighted us and—"

"And made for an alleyway," the first detective broke in, jealously. "We chased him down the alleyway—it was one running alongside a lumber yard. We got a patrolman to stand guard over the entrance to the yard while we investigated farther down the alley—but nothing doing."

"Did you search the yard?" asked Lamar quietly.

"Aw, how can you search a lumber yard?" scoffed Jacobs. "A guy could leave you playing hide-and-seek all week in one of those things. We put the patrolman there so he couldn't make a getaway."

The chief looked at Lamar.

"Well," he asked slyly, "does it change your mind?"

Max shook his head.

"Sorry. But it doesn't. Good-by. I'm not going back to the office just yet. I'm going to take a brisk walk. Maybe when I get back some of these cobwebs will be cleared out of my head. I'm not going to walk past any lumber yards, either," he added as a parting shot.

The four men—all interested in the man hunt for the little embezzler, Gordon—laughed heartily. If only one of them had looked out of the window of the chief's office at that minute he would have seen a weary, bedraggled creature holding a small, white card in his hand, wander past, looking for an address.

The weary, bedraggled creature was Charles Gordon, fugitive attorney, who, after a night spent on a damp park lawn, was seeking Max Lamar to throw himself on his mercy.

The sight of a blue uniform with brass buttons on the street corner ahead of him made him dodge rapidly into a convenient doorway. Heavy, regular footsteps approached his hiding place—the measured pacing of the patrolman on his beat, known so well to evaders of embarrassing situations. The blue, well-fed figure got abreast of the spot—passed it, unseeing. The coast was clear.

Gordon jumped from the doorway, skirted the building, keeping close to the wall, and turned the corner. There he drew a free breath and pushed his hat back on his forehead.

The second large doorway from the corner had "Black Building" carved in the stone up over the arch. Gordon looked at the card in his hand.

The penciled line under Lamar's name read, "512 Black Building." He walked through the huge glass door and started to mount the stairs. A man sneaking from the law's hands does not trust himself to elevators—or rather people who run them.

At the top of the fourth flight he turned down the hallway to his left and looked for the door with that

"I wonder if that's a call," she whispered, dimpling with mischief. "If it is, I'm going to answer it. Suppose it's some big crime case? A murder! Wouldn't it be exciting?"

She took the receiver from the book.

"Hello," she said, as brief and businesslike as could be.

"Hello," came back over the wire, in a short, frightened gasp. "Mr. Lamar?"

There was a sharp click, a buzzing, then utter silence. June moved the hook up and down impatiently. There



"Why Did You Come Here?"

was no answer. She became quite excited about it—and persisted. Suddenly a bored voice broke in:

"Number, please?"

"You cut me off!" June answered sharply.

"What number were you talking to?"

"I don't know. They called me."

"If I can locate the party, I'll call you again. Hang up, please."

"Oh bother!"

June put the receiver back on the hook and turned to Gordon.

"The reason I'm so put out and irritated about it," she explained, "is because I thought it sounded like my nurse's voice. It was so like hers—as though she were terribly frightened! It couldn't have been, though," she added meditatively. "She didn't know I was coming here—I didn't want her to. And she hadn't any reason to call up Mr. Lamar. In fact I know she'd avoid him. I suppose it was only my imagination."

At the Travis house Mary shrank away from the telephone and covered her face with her hands, in terror. June at Lamar's office! Why? And secretly, too. Horrors were piling up. It had been a wild, unreasoning fear that drew her to the telephone to communicate with Lamar. A sense of desperation and complete helplessness. She knew, as soon as the central repeated the number after her, that she had done a foolish thing. And then June had answered!

Mary crept to the foot of the stairway leading up to the attic and listened. She thought she heard a slow, measured breathing. Then the sound of something heavy being dragged over the floor, made her fly to her own room in instant terror.

There, sitting erect and tense in the comfortable old chair where she was accustomed to take her afternoon nap, she went over the happenings of the past hour.

Hour! Had it been only an hour! It was incredible to suppose that so much disaster could accumulate in sixty short minutes. She looked at the little silver boudoir clock, one of June's gifts. Just an hour since, she had looked from the window to see Yama coming up the walk, carrying his suitcase.

Only an hour since he had put the grip on the front porch and handed her the key to June's big trunk. Mary ticked off the dreadful events in a sort of morbid tabulation—the events that had followed:

When she had gone into June's room to get the rest of the unpacking finished Yama had followed her closely. His face must have been unnaturally ghastly at the time. She had not noticed until afterward, when its pallor was hideous.

Then the trunk! A slight difficulty in opening it, on account of the key sticking—the lid flying up suddenly, and a squat, ugly, grinning face, with cracked lips parted over ugly snags of teeth, shoved close to her own!

Mary now caught her reflection in the mirror over the bureau of her room. There were blue hollows around her eyes and a pinched, starved look clung about her nostrils.

"Smiling Sam's" threat rang in her ears.

"Thought you'd shake me, eh? Well, you've got to hide me now, or by—, I'll—"

She had hidden him—aided by Yama—the coward who had made this, a fearsome situation possible. Together they had urged Sam up the steps into the attic. He had gone, snarling at them, mouthing gutter oaths and dire threats. Just before he had closed the attic door he had flourished a knife with a menacing gesture. It was an indelible warning to Mary, as she sat alone, recalling the scene.

Suddenly, with a smothered scream, the old woman jumped to her feet and caught at the edge of the bureau to keep from falling. Upstairs from the attic there was a crash that shook the walls of the room, then a stifled moan!

(END OF TENTH INSTALLMENT.)



Our Thanksgiving Offerings

SKATING SETS

in all the new colors for Misses and Women.

LINENS at 50c, 75c and up.

NEW SERGE CHEMISE DRESSES in navy, black, and plum, \$15 to \$20. All up-to-date.

One Lot of Misses' and Women's COATS—For the Week at \$10. All worth from \$15 to \$25.

Several Broadcloth SUITS in green, plum and navy at 1-3 off the regular price.



Furs

in Grey, Fox, Hudson Seal, Beaver, Coney
Now On Display. See Them.

One Lot of HATS and TAMS to close out at 59c.



COME IN during the week and look around.

NEW GOODS ARRIVING DAILY.

M. E. ASHLEY & CO.

NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS

Foley Cathartic Tablets are just a plain, honest, old-fashioned physic. They act promptly and effectively on the bowels without pain, griping or nausea. They keep the stomach sweet the liver active, and the bowels regular. They banish biliousness, sick headaches, sour stomach, indigestion.—Hite's Drug Store.

THIS—AND FIVE CENTS!

DON'T MISS THIS. Cut out this slip, enclose five cents to Foley & Co. 2835 Sheffield Ave., Chicago, Ill., writing your name and address clearly. You will receive in return a trial package containing Foley's Honey and Tar Compound for coughs, colds and croup; Foley Kidney Pills, and Foley Cathartic Tablets.—Hite's Drug Store.

IF BACK HURTS USE SALTS FOR KIDNEYS

Eat less meat if Kidneys feel like lead or Bladder bothers you—Meat forms uric acid.

Most folks forget that the kidneys, like the bowels, get sluggish and clogged and need a flushing occasionally, else we have backache and dull misery in the kidney region, severe headaches, rheumatic twinges, torpid liver, acid stomach, sleeplessness and all sorts of bladder disorders.

You simply must keep your kidneys active and clean, and the moment you feel an ache or pain in the kidney region, get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any good drug store here, take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and is harmless to flush clogged kidneys and stimulate them to normal activity. It also neutralizes the acids in the urine so it no longer irritates, thus ending bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is harmless; inexpensive; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everybody should take now and then to keep their kidneys clean, thus avoiding serious complications. A well-known local druggist says he sells lots of Jad Salts to folks who believe in overcoming kidney trouble while it is only trouble.



Juliet Musidora in "The Vampires"

A man is known by his lawyer; a woman is known by her doctor.

Spite enables a fool to believe he's happy in his unhappiness.

TOOK THE HURT OUT OF HER BACK

Mrs. Anna Byrd, Tusculum, Ala., writes: "I was down with my back so I could not stand up more than half the time. Foley Kidney Pills took all of the hurt out." Rheumatic pains, swollen ankles, backache, stiff joints and sleep disturbing bladder ailments indicate disordered kidneys and bladder trouble.—Hite's Drug Store.

When a girl under 15 is ambitious to become an actress it's up to her mother to do a movie stunt with her slipper.

Too many people in this miserable old world are never happy unless they are bubbling over with unhappiness.

DRINK A GLASS OF REAL HOT WATER BEFORE BREAKFAST.

Says we will both look and feel clean, sweet and fresh and avoid illness.

Sanitary science has of late made rapid strides with results that are of untold blessing to humanity. The latest application of its untiring research is the recommendation that it is as necessary to attend to internal sanitation of the drainage system of the human body as it is to the drains of the house.

Those of us who are accustomed to feel dull and heavy when we arise, splitting headache, stuffy from a cold, foul tongue, nasty breath, acid stomach, can, instead, feel as fresh as a daisy by opening the sluices of the system each morning and flushing out the whole of the internal poisonous stagnant matter.

Everyone, whether ailing, sick or well, should, each morning before breakfast, drink a glass of real hot water with a teaspoonful of limestone phosphate in it to wash from the stomach, liver and bowels the previous day's indigestible waste, sour bile and poisonous toxins; thus cleansing, sweetening and purifying the entire alimentary canal before putting more food into the stomach. The action of hot water and limestone phosphate on an empty stomach is wonderfully invigorating. It cleans out all the sour fermentations, gases, waste and acidity and gives one a splendid appetite for breakfast. While you are enjoying your breakfast the phosphated hot water is quietly extracting a large volume of water from the blood and getting ready for a thorough flushing of all the inside organs.

The millions of people who are bothered with constipation, bilious spells, stomach trouble, rheumatic stiffness, others who have sallow skins, blood disorders and sickly complexions are urged to get a quarter pound of limestone phosphate from the drug store. This will cost very little, but is sufficient to make anyone a pronounced crank on the subject of internal sanitation.



"I've Got Your Pedigree, and it's a Peach."

have got me going. They make me see what a dub I am."

"I don't want to speak to you about the 'Red Circle,'" Allen told him. "Come on into the office and have a smoke. I want you to drop these cases for a while and go to work on the Gordon affair. The Farwell corporation will pay heavy blood money to get him back. You're the man I want on it."

"I'd like to do anything you ask me to, chief," he declared, sincerely, "but I can't handle this Gordon case. Because I'm going to stick to the 'Red Circle' until I solve it."

There was a knock at the door. The chief's secretary came in from the outside office.

"The two men you sent down to Surfton on the Gordon case are outside. They'd like to see you at once—very important."

Lamar reached for his hat. The chief interposed.

"No, I want you to stay and hear what they have to say. Maybe it will arouse your interest sufficiently to make you change your mind. Send them in, Harry."

The two detectives rushed into the doorway, each desperately anxious to tell the exciting story.

"Didn't get a trace of him down at Surfton," Boyle, the taller of the two, burst out as he crossed the

number on it. He found it—the door slightly ajar.

Very cautiously Gordon pushed it wider.

A graceful woman, prettily gowned, was seated in a chair beside the desk, with her back to him. The click of the closing door made her jump up and face him.

Gordon gasped. It was June Travis! "Mr. Gordon!" she exclaimed, looking around nervously. "Why did you come here? How foolish of you to take the chance! You had such a splendid opportunity to get away! Why didn't you take advantage of it?"

"Get away?" Gordon laughed bitterly. "Miss Travis, everyone thinks that 'getting away' is mere child's play until they try to do it. There is nothing so difficult. There is nothing in the torture line that can come up to it—this dodging the police when you don't know how. I'm tired and cold and hungry. I've spent the night on a lawn in the park. I haven't had a morsel of food. I'm sick and discouraged—ready to give up. Mr. Lamar is my last hope. I thought I'd try him. If he turns me down it's all over."

"Maybe, if you can tell somebody what has happened, it will make it easier for you," said June.

The telephone on the desk, at June's elbow, tinkled.

THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. Sent to Surfont by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle robs the guests at a ball. Mary points her out to Lamar, who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after Smiling Sam. On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat. Gordon, a fugitive, rescues Lamar, and June in turn saves Gordon from arrest. Smiling Sam sees the Red Circle on June's hand, tells her he knows her secret and follows her to the city.

ELEVENTH INSTALLMENT

SEEDS OF SUSPICION

In Lamar's office, Gordon stood with his back to the locked door; white-faced, gasping. For the moment, at least, he was safe—and his eyes never left the face of the girl.

"Now," cried June under her breath, "tell me everything—won't you?"

Gordon shook his head.

"I can't," he said. "I'm more grateful to you than I can ever make you know—you've saved my life; or rather, my liberty, that counts for more; but—honestly, I mustn't tell you why they're after me—not now, anyway! I—"

"But why not?" interrupted June. "Every minute is precious. Mr. Lamar is my friend—he calls me his 'first assistant.' I'm anxious to help you—I can help you—if you'll tell me everything; but how can I be of use at all when you keep me in the dark like this?"

Her earnest eyes were full of pleading, and reluctantly Gordon found himself weakening.

"You're a brick," he said, "to be interested in me at all, and I'm terribly grateful—"

"Then do as I say—begin at the beginning and tell me."

"How do we know but that someone is in that next room? Do you know where the other door leads to?"

"Wait a minute," said June quickly. "I'll look in the outer office. Mr. Lamar's confidential clerk may be there. Don't move till I come back."

On her way to the door, June hurriedly laid her gloves and wrist bag on Lamar's desk, half-subconsciously noting, at the same time, a pair of handcuffs that lay there. With a little shudder she passed them by, and, slowly opening the office door, peered cautiously out.

There, with his back to her, sat Gage, the confidential clerk, busily writing and serenely unconscious that anyone was looking at him. June softly closed and locked the door.

Gordon gave a nervous glance around, then began:

"The whole thing, in a nutshell, is this:

"The Farwell corporation retained me so that they might 'legally' defraud their employees of co-operative profits.

"When I found what they were up to, I rebelled and tried to expose the

me off, threatening me with arrest for 'starting a riot.' You see, I was helpless. The corporation blocked me," muttered Gordon, bitterly. "Then, not content with that, they ruined me financially.

"One day, I was in my office, when Farwell rang me up. 'I want to see you at once,' he said. 'We are wrong and we'll surrender.'

"It didn't take me long to hang up the receiver, get my hat and hurry over to his office. There he was, the grinning hypocrite, greeting me as if I were a long lost friend. He waved me to a chair, and then took out a paper and placed it airily on a desk near, and told me to read it. All the time he kept one hand on the thing, but I, like a fool, thought nothing of that—I was idiot enough to believe he was acting in good faith!

"This is what the hound told me to read," went on Gordon. "The Farwell corporation, through its attorney, Charles Gordon, hereby rescinds its recent action of withholding co-operative profits."

"There was a blank space left for me to sign, and, like a dolt, I signed it. Farwell picked it up and looked at it. Then the smiling mask dropped from his face. It grew all hard and cold.

"For a minute, I didn't understand the change. Then I saw the trick. Farwell had two pieces of paper, cleverly fastened, one above the other, just leaving room at the foot of the under one for my signature. While I thought I was signing the upper one, it was really the lower paper I was signing my name to—irrevocably!

Farwell crumpled the upper paper—the one I had thought I was signing—put it in his ash tray, and set fire to it. He held the other paper out for me to read and at the same time he demanded that I produce the 'securities' entrusted to me! This is what I had signed my name to:

"July 1. Received from the Farwell corporation this date, \$75,000 of said corporation's bonds to be held in trust by the undersigned until called for by the said corporation. Signed Charles Gordon. Witnessed by Silas Farwell!"

"For a minute I was too dazed to do anything. But Farwell wasn't. He rang his bell, and in came a plain-clothes man and a policeman.

"Farwell promptly ordered them to arrest me, on an embezzlement charge."

"I think I went mad. I snatched at the paper, but I couldn't get it for Farwell jammed it into the inside pocket of his coat. I grabbed him. I was bound I would get the paper or choke him. We had it hot and heavy for a few minutes. But of course I hadn't a show—three against one—I was a rat in a trap, nothing more."

"The miserable sneak!" said June.

"I was facing a charge of embezzlement through that double-paper trick of Farwell's, and I knew it. But the police were decent enough to let me go to my office for a moment. Luckily, they hadn't handcuffed me. I went to my desk, and the men stayed at the back of the room.

"While I was fussing about my desk I hit upon an idea. With one eye on the men, I slowly unscrewed the incandescent globe from my desk lamp, and tossed it against the rear wall—it smashed, of course, and at the smash they both turned to see what caused the noise. In that instant I leaped out of the open window, jammed it shut, and ran up the fire escape to the roof."

"Great!" applauded June, her right hand a-trob.

"In a second, the men were after me, though, firing their guns, as they came.

"I cut across the roofs until I found an open scuttle door. I ran inside and closed it. From that on it was an easy matter to cover my tracks; until at last I got away clean and found a hiding place in the shack at Surfont."

June said nothing, but her eyes were luminous and thoughtful. Her fingers were toying with the pair of handcuffs on the desk, and suddenly she picked them up and looked at them. Then, as her gaze took in her own hand, her face was suffused with a flush of color. There was the dreaded Red Circle, burning all too clearly against the white flesh.

At that moment someone turned the handle of the door leading to the outer office.

At the sound Gordon raised his head and met the frightened look in June's eyes.

"I'm going to give myself up, anyway," he said indifferently.

"No! NO!" whispered June vehemently. "You mustn't give yourself up now! I'm going to help you!"

Then the knock came a second time, followed by a little pause, and after that the sound of retreating footsteps. June moved quickly to the hall door and Gordon followed. June opened the door and looked out into the hall—then suddenly drew back, shutting and locking the door.

"It's Gage!" she whispered breathlessly. "And he's making for this door, now!"

Before the words were fairly out of

her mouth, the hall door was tried. A moment later there was a crash of splintered glass and Gage peered into the office through the jagged opening. His determined elbow had made. He saw no one, however, for the very good reason that June and Gordon were flattening themselves against the wall on the side nearest the door.

Gage then decided to reach through the opening and unlock the door from the inside. June, catching a glimpse of his entering arm, slipped quickly to the desk and picked up the handcuffs, then tiptoed hurriedly to the door as Gage's hand groped for the key. An instant more and she had deftly snapped one of the handcuffs around Gage's wrist and with trembling fingers snapped the other on the door knob.

June caught her wrist bag and gloves from the desk and, signaling to Gordon to follow her, unlocked the outer office door and slipped into the corridor.

As they hurried on—with Gordon a bit in the rear—June nervously thrust her right hand into its glove; she didn't intend to have Gordon or anyone else see that throbbing Red Circle.

Outside the office building June halted and looked up and down the street in search of a taxicab. Presently one appeared and she held up her hand to stop it. As it drew alongside the curb she and Gordon got in and drove away.

"All right, so far," said June. "Now for our next move."

"Look!" exclaimed Gordon, clutching June's hand, unconsciously pressing its Red Circle. "Look! There's Farwell! Farwell, just ahead of us! Good Lord! He's with Lamar!"

"Don't worry," whispered June, returning the pressure of his hand reassuringly. "It's going to be all right—couldn't have happened better! I'll get them both, now! I'm going to jump out and join them, and I want you to stay in the cab and wait for me a little way up the street. Or, no, the park is better."

Lamar and Farwell, deep in conversation, did not notice the sound of footsteps behind them, and so had no

tossed her wrist bag into the farthest corner on the hall floor. Then she hurried back to the anteroom, tore her hat off and pulled her hair away. Next she overturned two chairs, one after the other with a bang, and staggered wildly into the private office, gasping:

"Mr. Lamar! Mr. Lamar! Quick!" "What is it?" cried Lamar and Farwell in chorus, jumping up and running toward her.

"A man came in," panted June. "He snatched my handbag—threw me off! He's gone!"

Farwell was already in full pursuit of the imaginary thief, and at June's insistence Lamar promptly joined him.

This was just what June was waiting for. She ran to the paper-strewn desk, seized the coveted receipt, gave it a quick, keen glance, and hid it in her dress.

Then her eyes on the door, she hurried to the safe. Its door was open, as Farwell had left it, when he took out the Gordon papers to show to Lamar. With trembling fingers she snatched up a bundle of bank notes, stuck those in her dress also, and started back to her place.

Then she was scourged on by still another mad impulse. Going to the table she picked up a couple of sheets of plain letter paper, folded them together and tore them into rude circles. Her eyes gleamed oddly as she picked up a pen and, sitting down, began to print something on one of the circles.

Looking over her shoulder at every other letter, she finished her printing. Then she put the plain white circle on the dark blotting pad, got up, ran to the safe and hung the printed circle on the knob. With a sigh of satisfaction, she went back to the anteroom and collapsed into a chair, resuming her air of fright and exhaustion.

During their wild-goose chase Lamar and Farwell met the returning secretary and they all came down the hall together, talking excitedly.

While they were talking, Lamar, true to his trade, was looking; so it was he who found June's bag in the dark corner of the hall.

"Here's the bag, anyhow!" he ex-

claimed. "The man must have dropped it when he ran! See what Santa Claus brought for a good little girl!" he called to June, waving the bag before her as he entered the office.

"Oh—thank you, Mr. Lamar! I knew you would find it for me if any mortal could! I'm a million times grateful to you!"

"Let me go home with you," pleaded Lamar.

"Oh, no, really—I'll be perfectly all right by myself, answered June.

"Anyway, I shall insist on taking you down to the door."

"All right," said June, reluctantly.

Lamar stood looking tenderly after June for a moment, and then he went back to rejoin Farwell.

As he entered the door he collided with Farwell, who, wild-eyed and panting, gripped him by the arm and half-dragged him to the table of the inner office.

"The Gordon receipt's gone!" he gasped.

At the same moment, Lamar saw the white circle—it startled him most unpleasantly. Then Farwell pushed him toward the safe.

"See," he cried. "I'm robbed! They've taken a bundle of bank notes! Read this thing!" As he spoke he pulled the printed circle off the safe knob and thrust it into Lamar's hands.

What Lamar read was this:

"The money will be put to a good use by the Circle Lady."

He was speechless, and could only stare, wide-eyed, at the paper.

Speaking dazedly to himself, rather than to Farwell:

"Suspicion points to Miss Travis—but that's impossible! Impossible!"

He sat down and pulled the telephone toward him. He gave the number of his own office.

As soon as Gage recognized his voice, the clerk began pouring forth his tale about the mysterious woman who handcuffed him, to the door; where he might still have been if two clerks from other offices, hearing his

cries for help, had not come running in.

"Wait a minute," called Lamar over his end of the wire. "Could you see who it was that snapped the cuffs on you?"

"No," yelled Gage. "I couldn't see a thing except a woman's hand—with a Red Circle on the back of it."

Lamar turned white. Then he asked sharply:

"Any other clue?"

Gage's voice came hesitatingly over the wire.

"Well," he mumbled. "Miss Travis called. I showed her into your office to wait—and then she disappeared."

Lamar slowly hung up the receiver. Just as slowly he got up. He stood thinking a moment, then turned to Farwell and said, curtly:

"Keep this absolutely quiet until I investigate. I'll do all I can—good day."

Meanwhile, June, oblivious to all the trouble she had caused, made her way to the park, the coveted receipt and the banknotes hugged tight to her breast.

Gordon was still there, though the chauffeur had wandered onto the grass somewhere.

As she neared the cab, Gordon leaned out eagerly.

"What luck?" he said uneasily.

"If I looked as happy as I feel, you surely wouldn't have to ask," smiled June, holding out the receipt.

"Hooray!" cried Gordon, opening the paper and reading it.

Then he looked at June and the tears came into his eyes.

"You are a wonder," he said in a low voice. "I can never repay you, you marvelous girl! How did you ever get the paper?"

The happy light died out of June's eyes.

"Don't ask me how I got it," she murmured. "The only thanks I wish, is your silence. You do not know what I am. Now, you must go, and so must I; but first, I want you to accept this little roll of money—it may come in handy." As she spoke, she opened her wrist bag, and handed him some bank notes—not those she had taken from the safe.

"I can't take this," stammered Gordon. "You have done too much for me already!"

"You can, and you must," answered June firmly. "You don't know how much you may need it, nor how soon."

"Since you insist, we'll call it a loan," said Gordon, reluctantly pocketing the money—"and thank you a million times."

With a hurried handshake and goodbye June disappeared. Gordon looked about for his driver, who presently slouched into view, half asleep. Evidently he had found the grass very soothing and comfortable to his rheumatic old bones.

"Time to drive on, my son," said Gordon.

"All right, boss," yawned the driver. "Jer' soon's I crank 'er up."

Then he ambled around to the front of the cab and began to turn the crank. As the engine started to buzz hopefully, Gordon, still nervous and on the lookout, saw and recognized a plain-clothes detective, who was running toward the cab.

It took Gordon barely a second to leap to the steering wheel, knock the sleepy driver to one side and send the car forward.

The plain-clothes man was just too quick for him, however, and managed to leap onto the running board as the machine moved off.

Gordon put the car at full speed, and thanked his stars that he was ambidextrous. Steering a bit wildly with his left hand, he suddenly leaned out on the other side and struck the scrambling policeman fiercely in the stomach. The officer doubled up, but held on like a mountain goat.

It was a more or less even fight, as each man had but one arm free, and neither could use his legs to any advantage.

There was no chance for science; none for a clean, effective blow. The fighters beat at each other in futile, awkward fury.

The cab swirled and cavorted; but there were no park policemen to be seen, and the plain-clothes man could not take time to draw out his whistle.

But he did get out his revolver, presently, and was about to level it at his quarry, when Gordon flinched and drove his clenched fist into his foe's throat just below the point of the jaw.

It was the first good blow of the whole scrimmage. And it did its work. The detective reeled backward, trod on thin air and catapulted into the road, where he landed on his head and one shoulder.

There Gordon left him, with never a look back. His whole thought was centered upon getting far enough away so that he might safely leave the cab without fear of being tracked down.

Finally, nearing a park entrance, he slowed to a normal pace, and then stopped. No one seemed to notice him, so he got out quickly, and leaving the park, made for the downtown district.

He still had his hard-won "receipt," and he felt that as long as it was in existence, even though it was in his own possession, his liberty was more or less in danger.

Just then he passed by a vacant lot, and he saw what he needed most—a bonfire!

Tearing the receipt into tiny pieces, he threw them on the fire and watched them burn until every scrap had vanished into unrecognizable ashes.

Then he gave a long sigh of relief, squared his shoulders to the world, and continued on his way.

Is it strange that his thoughts

should turn to June, the girl who had done so much for him? He would have been less jubilant if he could have guessed the new complications in which she was just then entangled.

After leaving Gordon in the park, June had gone straight home and upstairs to her boudoir. There were still signs of the hurried return to town—an empty trunk, and some articles of clothing lying around; and she wondered idly what Mary had been about, not to put the room in better shape.

June never liked a messy room, so she went right on into her "den," before taking off her hat.

With a sigh of relief, and a smile, she took the package of bank notes

out of her dress. A dreamy look—a very sweet look—came into her eyes as she thought how much good that money was going to do. In her mind was a vivid picture of the hard-working men in Farwell's foundry, whose "co-operative profits" had been taken away from them.

"They shall have their money, just the same," she said to herself. "If I was stealing when I took it, it was in a good cause."

With the dreamy smile still lighting her face, June stood lost in happy thought, when suddenly she heard Mary's familiar footsteps, and her look changed to one of alarm.

She thrust the papers into the nearest hiding place—a table drawer, and just managed to get it shut as Mary came in from her own room with horror written in every line of her face.

"Why Mary," cried June, "what on earth is the matter with you? You look as if you'd seen a ghost!"

"I have, dearie—I have! It's worse'n that! Oh!" wringing her hands and crumpling her face up into a mask of tragedy. "What will we ever do now, my lamb! We're in such a lot of trouble."

"Now, Mary darling, be calm," she bade the nurse, "and tell me all about it—I'm sure it isn't as bad as you think—"

"It is, baby, it's worse! It's that awful man!"

"What awful man?" June's face went white. "You can't mean—"

"Yes," went on Mary huskily, "it's him! That 'Smiling Sam' Eagan we thought we was rid of for good'n' all!"

"Not here?" panted June in stark terror.

"He's right here in this house—we brought him with us! He made Yama put him into the big wardrobe trunk—and when I started to unpack it, there he was, with his old cunning sneaking face grinning at me as sassy as could be!"

"Good heavens!" cried June, at her wits' end. "Will trouble never end? Where is he now?"

"Up in the attic," said Mary. "And I've had to feed him and make him comfortable. I was so 'fraid he'd start a rumpus."

"What about mother," queried June fearfully.

"Mrs. Travis don't know a thing, as yet. But it's only a question of time, unless we can get him away from here right off. He isn't disposed to make things any easier for us than he can help, either. I heard a big noise up there just now. I guess he stumbled over something. Then I heard him moan—or, maybe, swear!"

"There! Hear that?" cried June and Mary simultaneously. Then they clung to each other, expecting, they knew not what.

At that moment, unconscious of all that was going on inside the house, Lamar slowly passed by; his head bent, his face haggard and drawn. He had to come there intending to see June; to face her with the facts; and to ask her to tell him what she knew about all the wretched business. But when he reached the house he somehow found that he loved her too much to put her to the test.

"Oh, it can't be—it can't be," he said aloud. "She is as holy as—as my own mother. She is above suspicion. As far above suspicion as a saint in a cathedral. And yet—and yet—every circumstance points to her as—as—"

An idea flashed into his mind, electrifying him to quick decision.

"Tomorrow!" he muttered, half in dread, half in triumph, "yes, that is it. Tomorrow will tell! Tomorrow will prove the truth!"

(END OF 11TH INSTALLMENT.)



Deftly Snapped on the Handcuffs.



We Had It Hot and Heavy for a Few Minutes.

idea of June's approach until she came abreast of them as they reached the entrance door of Farwell's office building. June nodded and smiled at Lamar, who shook hands eagerly, his face radiant. Then he turned to Farwell and introduced him to June.

"How do you do, Mr. Farwell?" said June in her most innocent manner.

"I wish you'd come in with us, Miss Travis," Lamar said. "Farwell is going to show me the Gordon papers—I want your advice."

As they entered the office anteroom Lamar turned to June.

"Can you make yourself comfortable here for a few minutes?" he asked, offering a chair. "Farwell and I will go over the preliminaries by ourselves, in the inner office—we won't bore you with unnecessary details."

June was alone, save for a very young secretary who was seated at a desk stamping letters.

"If only that miserable secretary would go away!" she thought.

Presently he did that very thing. June jumped up at once. Getting a chair from the corner of the room, she carried it to the door, jumped lightly up and applied a pair of very pretty but very curious eyes to the transom.

Lamar and Farwell were seated at a table. Papers were strewn everywhere; but Farwell had separated Gordon's securities receipt from the others and was just in the act of handing it to Lamar.

"There's the receipt," June heard him say. "It means prison if we can capture him."

Lamar let the paper drop to the table before him. He hated the business in hand.

June, who loved him, read all this in his face.

"Here is where I come in again," she said to herself.

In a flash she saw how it could all be done. Jumping lightly down, she landed on the floor on the tips of her toes and slipped out into the hallway.

With a quick look up and down, she

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC. NOVELIZED FROM THE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

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SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted are the only known living of the Borden. Max Lamar, a detective, is detailed to keep an eye on Jim. June Travis and her mother meet Jim as he is released. Jim and Ted are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. Sent to Surfont by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle robs the guests at a ball. Mary points her out to Lamar, who follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels and goes after Smiling Sam. On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat. Gordon, a fugitive, rescues Lamar, and June in turn saves Gordon from arrest. Smiling Sam sees the Red Circle on June's hand, tells her he knows her secret and follows her to her city home. She helps Gordon to get away, after recovering for him the securities receipt which incriminates him by tricking Farwell and Lamar.

TWELFTH INSTALLMENT

LIKE A RAT IN A TRAP

While Max Lamar was musing in miserable uncertainty over the problem of June's guilt or innocence, June herself was confronted by a problem quite as disheartening and far more perilous.

Mary had told her of "Smiling Sam" Eagan's presence in the Travis house, and June realized all it might mean to her. The man, hidden in the attic storeroom, held her fate, her liberty, in the hollow of his grimy hand.

He had seen the Red Circle on her hand. He was crafty enough to know how fearful a hold over the girl this secret gave him.

June could bear the suspense no longer. Impulsively she got to her feet and crossed the room toward the hall door.

"Where are you going, dearie," asked Mary in sudden anxiety.

"I'm going to see him," replied June. "I must."

June had taken off her hat, and as she spoke she was stripping the gloves from her hands. The left glove came off first. Then, as the right glove was half removed, its wearer noted the pulsing Red Circle of her hand. Instinctively she drew the glove over it. Meantime Mary had flung herself between June and the door, exclaiming in horror:

"Oh, my dear, my dear! You mustn't! He—he might kill you!"

"Kill me?" echoed June, bitterly. "I almost wish he would!"

"If you're going there," declared the valiant nurse, giving up the unequal battle, "then I'm going too. I'll keep him from harming my baby if anyone can."

June a step ahead, they emerged into the gloomy attic room.

Mary paused, staring timorously around the dismal and cluttered room.

From an impromptu couch of patched quilts and moth-eaten pillows, between two trunks, a frowny head cautiously came into view.

At sight of June and Mary he grinned pleasantly, got up, stretched



The Red Circle Blazed Into View.

himself and slouched forward to meet them.

"Well, well!" he rumbled, in mock cordiality. "It seems like this is my reception day. Welcome to Castle Eagan, ladies. I'd 'a' spruced up a bit if I'd known I was goin' to have company."

"Sam," said the girl, facing the grinning fugitive. "I've come here to have you help me."

"Help you?" repeated Eagan, puzzled.

"Yes, by leaving here."

"Oh, I see. Nothin' doing, sweetie. I—"

The men drew near. At sight of their employer, they halted, glanced at one another, and then stepped up to him, taking off their hats as they came.

"Mr. Farwell," began the spokesman, nervously, clearing his voice as he spoke, "Mr. Farwell, we are a delegation from the hands, chosen—chosen to ask you if you mean to make good on your promise to share profits with us. We—"

"No," said Farwell, coolly. "I don't. I explained that, in the notice I had the janitor tack up on the work-room doors. I—"

"Then, you rotten crook," roared the spokesman, losing hold of his temper. "What do you mean to do?"

"Just this," answered Farwell.

Before the others could guess his intent, his left fist caught the spokesman, flush on the point of the jaw, and sent him sprawling.

The stricken man scrambled to his feet. His two companions at his side, he sprang like an angry dog at Farwell's throat. But the three men stopped their rush almost in midair, as the factory owner flashed out the pistol from his coat pocket and leveled it at the foremost of them.

There was an instant pause; as the assailants blinked irresolutely at the black pistol muzzle and at the coldly murderous eyes behind it.

"Go back to your work," said Farwell, breaking the momentary silence.

Beneath the menace of the leveled weapon and the dominating gaze of their employer, the trio looked sheepishly at each other; then, one by one, turned and shuffled away toward the yard.

Farwell dropped the pistol back into his pocket and continued upon his way to his own office.

The three delegates returned to their fellows. The rest of the men crowded eagerly around them for news of the interview.

"It's no use," reported the spokesman. "I asked him, and he—"

Something white flew through the air, striking him across the eyes and then falling to the ground at his feet.



Struck the Would-Be Murderer Across the Knuckles.

The spokesman looked around him in bewilderment. So did the other men. They had a fleeting glimpse of a girl on horseback, riding away from the board fence that divided the yard from the street.

"She threw it at you," said one of the men. "I saw her. What is it?"

The spokesman had stooped and was picking up the white thing that had struck him. It was a large envelope, very thick. The others pressing close around him in jostling curiosity, he tore open one end of the envelope.

Out fell a package of big denomination bills. A cry of amazement broke from the crowd. The spokesman, holding the money in one hand, stared stupidly at the envelope. He read aloud the typewritten address:

"FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE FARWELL CORPORATION."

"What the blue blazes!" he sputtered.

Then he saw a sheet of notepaper sticking half way out of the torn envelope. He drew it forth and, in a voice shaking with wonder, read the few typed lines it contained:

"Accept and distribute the inclosed as part payment of your accumulated co-operative profits in the Farwell corporation—An Agent."

A cheer from hundreds of hoarse throats broke in on his reading.

"Come on!" yelled the spokesman, enthusiastically, as he flourished the handful of big bills. "Come on, boys! Let's go to the boss and thank him. He's a white man, after all."

Farwell, in his ground-floor office, overlooking the yard, glanced out of the open window, just in time to see the crowd start toward the building. His hand went to his pistol butt. He thought he understood that unanimous movement.

Presently, his look of dogged defiance changed to one of bewilderment. This mob of avengers was behaving most strangely! The men were dancing along, laughing and waving their caps and shaking hands with one another. Surely no angry mob would act thus.

Just then, the front rank of them caught sight of Farwell standing in the open window. A roar went up.

"Three cheers for Silas Farwell!" shouted the spokesman.

The three cheers were given with a thunderous zest.

The men came to a halt just in front of the window, showing forward the spokesman, who still held the bundle of money in one hand, and the typewritten letter in another.

"Mr. Farwell," he began, "we want to thank you. It was a funny way of sending us our cash, but it was mighty welcome. And I want to apologize to you for—"

"What are you blithering about?" queried Farwell, in dire perplexity. "And what's that money you're shaking at me? What is—?"

"The money?" echoed the spokesman, as a murmur of surprise ran through the crowd. "Why, the co-operative profits money, of course. The money this letter of your agent—"

He got no further. Farwell reached out of the window and snatched the typed note from his hand. He would have snatched the money, too, but that chance to be just out of his reach.

"Who gave you this?" roared Farwell when he could get his voice.

"A girl," answered the puzzled spokesman. "On horseback. Threw it over the fence to me. She rode past, two minutes ago. And—"

But Farwell, note in hand, had bolted out into the street. He was just in time to see a girl, mounted on a slenderly built saddle horse, turn a corner, several blocks away, and vanish from his view.

Alongside the opposite curb lounged a mounted policeman, chatting with a passerby. Farwell ran across and seized the officer by the arm.

"Did you see a woman ride past here a few moments ago?" he demanded.

"Why, yes," returned the patrolman, wondering at his interlocutor's excitement. "I did. I didn't take much notice to her, except that she rode mighty well. She'd gotten past me before I saw her. Is—?"

"She has robbed me," interrupted Farwell. "Catch her! She turned to

the past twenty-four hours. And now, at last, he had nerved himself to make the test he had planned—the test which, he believed, would prove to him, once and for all, June's guilt or innocence.

With shrinking heart, but with firm step, he approached the Travis house. And at the same moment, Yama, the Jap butler, was privily conveying "Smiling Sam" Eagan's late breakfast to the attic. For some occult reason, Sam loved to torment and frighten the dapper little butler. And Yama's visits to the hiding place were moments of terror to the poor little yellow man.

Today was no exception. He set the tray down in front of Sam and started to pour out a glass of wine for him. But Yama's hand shook pitifully, from sheer fright. A spoonful of wine fell on Sam's knee.

With a truly terrifying growl Eagan snatched up the carving knife he still carried in his belt and rushed at the Jap.

"I'm going to cut my monicker on your measly heart!" he snarled.

Yama did not pause to see if the threat would be fulfilled. Dropping everything, he fled.

Eagan returned the knife to its place, chuckling amusedly at the scare he had given the butler. Then he picked up the bottle of wine and tried to read its label.

But the light was dim and his eyes were nearsighted. He went over to the window to get a better view of the label. Close to the pane he stood for an instant, curiously and laboriously spelling out the name.

And, in that instant, Max Lamar, turning in at the front walk, chanced to look up—and saw him.

Lamar halted and stared upward more keenly. But Sam had moved away from the window. Max, with the excitement of a hound on the scent, bounded up the veranda steps.

At the top, he collided violently with a little figure that shot out of the front door. It was Yama, still in flight from Sam's imaginary pursuit.

"What's up?" demanded Max.

Yama stared, speechless and gasping.

"What's the matter?" repeated Lamar. "Did you see him, too? Were you going for the police?"

"Saw—saw nobody!" babbled the Jap, still remembering Sam's threat of what he would do should Yama betray his hiding place. "Saw nobody. Going for a little walk. I—"

"Going for a little hundred-yard dash, you mean," corrected the perplexed Lamar. "Let me in there. I've just seen—"

"Why, Mr. Lamar!" exclaimed a voice from the foot of the steps.

Max turned, to see June, in riding dress, crop in hand, mounting the veranda toward him.

"Miss Travis!" he said, hurriedly. "I caught a glimpse of a man I'm almost sure was Sam Eagan."

"Really?" asked June, her heart beating fast. "How interesting! Whereabouts?"

"In that topmost window of your house. The attic window, I suppose. He was—"

"What nonsense!" she laughed, nervously. "How could he possibly—?"

"I must go and look for him," insisted Lamar. "That is, if you'll let me. He probably remembered your goodness to him in other days, and sneaked in here to try to persuade you to help him. Let me go in, please. He mustn't get away from us again."

June, too confused to make any protest, led the way into the house. She was sick with terror. In the library doorway they met Mrs. Travis. She came forward, cordially, to greet Lamar. The crime specialist cut short her salutations by saying, brusquely:

"Mrs. Travis, I have reason to think a criminal is hiding in this house. 'Smiling Sam' Eagan, the crook I told you about, down at Surfont. May I search for him?"

"Why certainly," assented the startled old lady. "But—oh, I do hope you are mistaken, Mr. Lamar! I can't believe—"

Max had already started up the stairs. June, dreading to go with him, yet dreading far more to remain in suspense, followed. Mary, who had been crossing the lower hall as Lamar entered, hurried after her.

The search of the next floor was merely perfunctory.

"He's not down here!" declared the crime specialist at last, in growing impatience. "I'm going to try the attic. How do I get to it?"

He was standing close to the doorway, as he spoke, the doorway leading to the attic stairs. And his strong voice carried every word to the fugitive above.

At the sound, Eagan started to his feet, knife in hand. This attic was no place to be cornered like a rat in a trap. If he could get downstairs, a knife-thrust in Lamar's body might leave the way free for him to escape to the street. Yes, and that same knife-thrust might silence Lamar forever. If so, he had no fear of the household's women blabbing as to who had done the murder. They would not dare.

Knife in fist, Eagan tiptoed down the stairs. With his free hand he opened the door a little way, and peeped out into the upper hall.

Lamar had just moved from that very door, and was standing with his back to him, only a few feet away, looking about for the entrance to the attic stairs.

But June saw the door open. She saw the broad, hideous face, the tight-gripped knife. She saw Sam crouch for a spring. She saw him, knife raised, launch himself at the unsuspecting Lamar.

Then, as the man stabbed, June awoke from her daze of horrified inaction. With a scream she seized Lamar, and by main force hurled him to one side and half way around.

The knife-thrust missed its mark by the fraction of an inch. Lamar, whirling, caught sight of his foe. As Eagan's arm went back to stab again, Max grappled him.

Back and forth across the hall, the two men swayed and lurched in their fierce wrestle. The shoulder of one of the two close-locked bodies struck against the attic door, slamming it

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Smashed the Vase Down on Eagan's Head.

shut. Chairs were overturned, and the hallway became a bedlam of noise and fury.

Sam managed to wrench his knife hand free. He lunged murderously at Lamar's throat. Max was too late to guard the blow. But he shifted his lithe body to one side. The blade flashed past it and was buried, half to the hilt, in the wood of the door.

Sam now turned his full attention to the task of crushing his opponent with his bare hands.

Max merely defended himself, as best he could. At last he was able to draw his pistol.

But, as he did so, Sam seized the crime specialist's right wrist with both his own huge hands, and exerting all his brute strength and weight, twisted Max's hand outward and upward.

No human power could withstand that pressure, so suddenly and skillfully exerted. The pistol leaped from Lamar's opened fingers and fell to the floor.

Mrs. Travis, at first sound of the battle, darted into the nearest room, snatched up a telephone and summoned police headquarters.

It took her some moments to get the connection, because police headquarters "Central" was just then listening to a patrolman's thrilling account of the way Attorney Charles Gordon had come to the chief of police, a little while before, and given himself up to justice—laughing as he did so.

But presently Mrs. Travis was switched from headquarters to the precinct station phone. And in less than a minute two policemen were on their way to the Travis house.

Meantime, the fight in the hall had reached a new and more vital stage—a skirmish for possession of the fallen pistol.

It was Sam Eagan who at last seized the pistol. Despite his enemy's efforts he gradually worked its muzzle toward Lamar's writhing body.

The muzzle at last touched Max's side. Sam's finger tightened on the trigger. In the same moment the pistol spun out of his hand, exploding harmlessly, the heavy-caliber bullet burying itself in the woodwork of the wainscoting.

June had seen the newest peril of the man she loved, and with her riding crop had struck his would-be murderer heavily across the knuckles.

Sam whirled about to face her. As he did so Lamar snatched up a heavy vase from a pedestal and brought it down with all his remaining force upon Eagan's head.

Smiling Sam dropped to the floor like a stricken bull.

Max bent over him and snapped a pair of handcuffs on the senseless man's thick wrists. Then, weak and dizzy and panting, Lamar rose again to his feet, swaying as he tried to stand upright.

"He must have broken in here last night," he gasped. "Miss Travis, I owe you my life. I—"

"Your hand is cut!" cried June. "See, it's bleeding! Let me bind it up for you."

The tramp of feet sounded on the stairs below them. The two policemen, escorted by the chattering and shuddering Yama, ascended to the upper hallway. At a word from Lamar they picked up the unconscious Eagan and lugged him away between them.

Max, still reeling with exhaustion, turned abruptly to June.

"Miss Travis," he said. "I must ask you one or two questions. I would cut off my right arm sooner than ask them. But I must. Everything depends on your answers."

June forced a smile to her ashen lips. She knew the moment had come. The moment of reckoning, which she so long had dreaded.

(END OF 12TH INSTALLMENT.)

THE RED CIRCLE

By Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER,"
"SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE
SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his hand, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted, the only known living of the Borden, are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. Sent to Surftown by Smiling Sam, Alma La Salle robs the guests at a ball. Lamar follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels, and goes after Smiling Sam. On the edge of a cliff pursuer and pursued engage in deadly combat. Gordon, a fugitive, rescues Lamar, and June in turn saves Gordon from arrest. Smiling Sam sees the Red Circle on June's hand, tells her he knows her secret and follows her to her city home. She helps Gordon to get away, after recovering for him the securities receipt which incriminates him by tricking Farwell and Lamar. Lamar suspects June. He captures Smiling Sam. Gordon gives himself up.

THIRTEENTH INSTALLMENT

BRANDED AS A THIEF

Lamar, in the midst of the sentence, reeled dizzily. He would have fallen; but for June's restraining arm. He collapsed into the nearest chair.

In a few minutes he opened his eyes and sat up straight, still somewhat weak and shaky, but himself again.

And then he noticed that June was standing above him once more, looking down at his haggard face with all her soul in her big eyes.

The sight of her brought back to Max the purpose of his visit to the Travis house that day—a purpose that his life-and-death grapple with "Smiling Sam" Eagan had driven momentarily from his mind.

He found it strangely hard to say to June what he had come to say.

Taking hold of his faltering resolution, Max prepared to get through with the cruel ordeal as quickly as possible.

He looked from Mrs. Travis to Mary; then, hesitatingly, said:

"I—I should very much like to speak with Miss Travis alone for a few minutes, if you don't mind. You'll pardon me, won't you, for asking it? It's very important."

Mrs. Travis went through to the veranda. But Mary lingered just outside the library door and crouched there, tremblingly listening.

Lamar, for an instant, gazed half-frowningly at the girl who awaited the ordeal.

"What's the use?" he blurted out, incoherently. "You can't know anything about the Farwell theft—or any of the rest of the Red Circle crookedness. I know you don't. And I won't insult you by asking you. Besides—you saved my life. June, dear!"

Still too weak to trust himself on his feet, he reached forward impulsively and caught her hand in his as she stood, startled, before him.

June did not try to draw away the hand he held prisoner. She found herself sinking to her knees beside Lamar's chair. She no longer dared meet the glow in his eyes lest she lose all hold over her reserve and tell him of her love.

"I love you!" Lamar was saying, over and over. "I love you, June, my sweetheart. Oh, I love you!"

The girl's heart was beating madly. "He loves me! He loves me! The man I love loves me!"

She could not stir, she could not speak. Kneeling there, her breath



Tried With All Her Might to Snatch Away the Incriminating Hand.

coming quick and irregularly, she listened.

"If you will try to care for me—just a little, little bit," he was urging, "I'll spend my whole life trying to be worthy of you; trying to make you happy. June—my darling—tell me you love me! Tell me—"

His imploring words fell silent in the very midst of a sentence. He had started to raise her little white hand to his lips. As he did so, his eyes for the first time left her face.

He glanced down lovingly at the unresisting hand he had lifted.

And there, on its satiny surface blazed and throbbled the hideous Red Circle!

His mouth open, his eyes glazed with horror, his body frozen into motionlessness, the man stared dully, unbelievably, at the frightful scarlet stain.

The Red Circle was on June Travis' hand. She was the mysterious woman—the woman in black—the veiled woman—the Red Circle lady—the inheritor of Jim Borden's crime—curse! She—June Travis! It could not be. Yet—it was!

June had listened spellbound to his ardent love-avowal.

But she found he was no longer looking at her face. It was her right hand at which he was staring with such dumb fixedness. Her own gaze—dreamy with unspoken love—followed the direction of his.

She looked down at her hand that his cold fingers still grasped. And she saw the Red Circle.

With a wordless cry she shrank back and tried with all her might to snatch away the incriminating hand from his clasp. But his grip on it was too strong.

Slowly, Lamar raised his head. And now, at last, their eyes met.

"The—the Red Circle!" he croaked.

"You?"

She strove to speak. But her parched lips refused their duty.

"You!" he gasped, hoarsely. "You! A—a thief? And you've played with me—tricked me—used me as a cat's paw!"

"No!" she wailed. "No! Oh, you don't understand! I—I can't explain—I didn't mean to—I—I couldn't help it. I couldn't. Oh, Max, for God's sake, don't look at me like that! I can't stand it! Don't—Max!"

She was on her knees now, groveling at his feet; pouring out broken entreaties, hysterical pleas.

"You tricked me!" he raged. "You betrayed my trust!"

"No! No!" she wept convulsively. "Oh, Max! I'm not what you think I am! Or, if I am, it isn't because I want to be. God knows how I've fought against it. But it's too strong for me. If I could make you understand—"

Her voice was strangled with sobs. Just outside the arch of the library doorway crouched Mary—shuddering, aghast; dreading to go, fearing to stay.

Peering cautiously around the edge of the arch the old woman saw the two stricken lovers. She saw Lamar's white, drawn countenance staring blankly into nothingness. She saw the set look on his face soften to utter wretchedness.

Then, as his eyes fell on June's crushed figure, the former love crept back, unbidden, into the man's visage.

And Mary drew a long breath of relief. This man would not betray her darling's secret.

Inch by inch his hand crept out until it rested on June's.

"Don't be unhappy, little girl," he said, very gently. "I am going to shield you. Because I love you, dear. I—"

His voice choked. June's hand stole into his. At her appealing pressure he found words again.

"I want you to marry me, my sweetheart," he went on. "Marry me and we'll fight this curse together. Side by side, with our love to help us, we'll win the victory over it."

"Max!" she cried, a world of gratitude and longing in her sob-shaken voice. "Max! You want me to be your wife, after—after—?"

"Yes," he made answer, very simply. "Will you marry me?"

She swayed toward him, her tear-stained face glorified by the love that shone from it. But before his arms could close around her, she started back, pulling her hand away from him. "No, dear," she said. "No. It can't be. I—"

"You don't love me?"

"Love you?" she breathed. "Why, Max, I didn't think there was anything on earth so strong as this love of mine for you. I do love you. You know I do. I love you too much to be your wife. I can't marry you with this black taint on my life—with this vile Red Circle burning on my hand."

"But June!" he pleaded, "we will fight it together. We—"

"I must fight it alone," she answered with sad firmness. "And now I want to go, please; while I am still strong enough to help you save yourself. Go, dear."

"No!" he denied, doggedly.

"Best go, Mr. Lamar," advised Mary, gliding forward into the room and slipping her arm around June's heaving shoulders. "Best go now. She is right. She knows. And, anyway, you'll gain nothing by staying. Give her time to think."

Max looked from one woman to the other in puzzled irresolution. Then—"I will go," he said, briefly, "but I'm coming back. And I'm going to keep on coming back until I get the answer I want."

"Smiling Sam" Eagan opened one eye. Then, very cautiously, he opened the other.

Now, with much difficulty, he began to collect his scattered wits. Painfully Eagan lifted his spitting-ly aching head from the pillow and

glared around the ward. In the doorway stood a nurse. Chatting with her was one of the policemen who had carried Eagan to the hospital and who had remained to get a report on the disabled prisoner's condition.

Sam feebly beckoned to the nurse. She came toward him. He muttered disjointedly:

"I want to—see the chief of police. Tell him—important. Red Circle!"

He slumped back on the cot again groggy with headache. Chief Allen had had a busy morning. Charles Gordon, the fugitive attorney, had voluntarily given himself up to justice. The chief had at once sent word to Farwell, who had come in haste to police headquarters, to confront the captive.

Gordon had been searched in Farwell's presence. But no trace of the incriminating receipt could be found on him. And, perforce, he had been released for lack of evidence to hold him.

The chief and Farwell were still sitting in the former's office at headquarters discussing the case when the telephone buzzed.

"This is queer," remarked Allen as he put back the receiver on the hook. "Smiling Sam" Eagan was captured by Lamar today at the Travis house.

Knocked out. He was taken to the hospital. And now he sends word he wants to see me. Says it's something important about the Red Circle case. I'll step over there and—

"Red Circle!" exclaimed Farwell. "That concerns me as much as anyone in town. I'm going to the hospital with you, if you don't mind."

They found "Smiling Sam" Eagan propped up among a heap of pillows in his hospital cot.

"What did you want to see me about?" asked the chief.

"What did I want?" echoed Eagan. "Oh, nothin' much. Only to tell you



"June Travis is the Red Circle Woman."

who the Red Circle woman is. That's all."

"If it's a joke—" began Allen.

"A joke?" Sam caught him up viciously. "Oh, it's a joke, all right. And it's on her. On June Travis."

"June Travis!" repeated Allen, incredulous.

"June Travis," cried Farwell, in the same breath, "I knew it! I was sure of it. But Lamar kept insisting she—"

"June Travis," declared Sam, speaking slowly, venomously. "June Travis is the Red Circle woman."

"I don't believe you," said the chief. "June Travis is the Red Circle woman," doggedly insisted Sam. "Do you want me to tell you about it or don't you?"

"Go ahead," assented Allen, after a quick glance at the excited Farwell.

"I was 'hiding out' down at Surftown," began Sam. "In a cave on the edge of the beach. She was standing right near the cave the other day and I saw the circle on her hand. I—"

"Your eyes fooled you," scoffed the chief. "In the glare of sunlight the—"

"My eyes didn't fool me," reiterated Sam. "I saw it, I tell you. The same-shaped mark that used to be on 'Circle Jim' Borden's hand. I'm givin' you straight goods. Go and see the circle on her hand if you don't believe me. Yes, and as I was watchin' it that day I heard her nurse say the girl was 'Circle Jim's' daughter."

The chief still partly unconvinced, turned again to Farwell.

"The man's telling the truth!" ejaculated Farwell. "It all fits in. She's the Red Circle woman, I tell you. I knew it all along. I'd have sworn to it. But Lamar kept putting me off and putting me off. Chief, I'm going to the Travis house. I'm going to have a look at June Travis' hand for myself."

He stamped out of the ward. The chief reluctantly followed.

He paused only to order the waiting policeman to remain on guard over Eagan. Then he hurried on, catching up with Farwell on the sidewalk in front of the hospital.

Eagan, his work of vengeance done, leaned back on the pillows with a placid smile. His bright little eyes

roved dreamily around the ward where he chanced to be the only patient. His glance took in the figure of the guard-ian policeman and then moved on to the shut door of a clothes closet. He noted a key in the door's lock.

"Say, old playmate," he addressed the policeman, "I wish you'd stake me to another pillow if you can get hold of one. My back's half-broken. Don't bother to call the nurse. I sure do hate to have women-folks pawin' around me when I'm sick. There's lot of pillows in that closet. I saw her take some from there. Toss me one, just for luck."

Goodnaturedly, the policeman crossed the room to obey the request. He unlocked and opened the closet door.

"Why," he began, "there's no pillows in here, man. The—"

He got no further. A mighty shove in the small of the back sent him headlong into the closet. Before he could turn, Sam had slammed the closet door shut and locked it.

Headless of the policeman's frenzied pounding on the panels, Eagan thrust his bare feet into his shoes, drew on his trousers and bolted for the corridor.

In the doorway he collided with a doctor and an orderly, who were entering the ward, the nurse at their heels. Taken unprepared the two men were not quick enough to stop the fugitive. He dashed past them, scattering them to left and to right, and gained the corridor.

And there—unfamiliar with his surroundings—Eagan started in the wrong direction. Instead of going toward the stairway, he ran the opposite way. And presently he found himself at the corridor's farther end with an open window behind him and with no other means of escape.

Before he could look outward through the open casement to learn at

that chance, without stopping to calculate its percentage.

Putting all his strength into one tremendous heave of body and arms he wriggled free from the policeman. As the latter instantly darted at him again, Sam wheeled around and sprang out through the open window just behind him.

The window was one hundred and thirty-two feet above the ground. And beneath it was a cement pavement.

"Smiling Sam" Eagan had fought his last fight.

He was stone dead before the first gaping attendant could reach the street and bend above him.

Among those who gathered around the shapeless heap was Max Lamar who, returning from June's home, had decided to stop at the hospital for a word with the prisoner. The word was never spoken.

The patrolman, recognizing Lamar, hastened to tell him the tale of the battle; omitting merely his own imprisonment in the closet.

"The chief had just been here, too," finished the officer. "Sam had sent for him. Told him about the Red Circle woman and—"

Max waited to hear no more. Leaving the policeman in the middle of a sentence he set off at a swinging stride for the Travis home. Clearly, no time was to be lost.

Mary had persuaded June to leave the library where everything spoke so eloquently of the bitter scene with Lamar. The nurse had led the weeping girl out into the garden. There, seated beside her on a light rustic bench, Mary was trying vainly to comfort her.

And there Mrs. Travis joined them, eager to talk over the capture of Sam and to ask what Lamar had had to say to June in the library. She attributed the girl's tears to excitement and reaction after the fight in the hall above. Mary, as best she could, sought to save June from answering the torrent of questions and to turn the tide of Mrs. Travis' conversation. Presently something occurred to make this kindly effort no longer necessary.

Yama was ushering two men into the garden. June recognized them as Chief Allen and Farwell. And her heart stood still.

"Good day, Miss Travis," began the chief, awkwardly holding out his hand as he spoke. "You'll excuse us for intruding won't you? You see, we—"

He paused. June had accepted his proffered hand. He held her fingers in his for a moment peering down at the back of the little hand that lay in his own. Farwell also stared wolfishly at her hand.

But no circle rewarded their keen examination. The back of June's hand was white and unmarked.

"What can I do for you, chief?" asked June, struggling to keep her voice steady and pretending not to notice the double inspection of her hands.

"Well," stammered the chief, woe-fully at ease. "You see, it's this way, Miss Travis: 'Smiling Sam' Eagan wanted me to see you about—about the Red Circle."

"I'm afraid I can't be of very much help to you," answered the girl. "I've heard Mr. Lamar speak about the Red Circle, of course, and I read something about it, I think, in one of the papers, but that's really all I know. What did poor Sam think I—?"

"Look!" shouted Farwell, in savage glee, "look there, chief! Look!"

When Allen had released June's right hand the girl had allowed it to drop, carelessly, on the back of the bench. Farwell was pointing, excitedly, at it. The chief's gaze followed the direction of the stubby forefinger.

June, with a cry, thrust her hand behind her. But not before both men had seen the Red Circle begin to gleam through the soft whiteness of its flesh.

"The Red Circle!" exclaimed Chief Allen.

He took a step toward the girl. Her nerve going to pieces, she screamed and fled into the house. At the chief's next step he found himself confronted by Mary.

The old woman, eyes ablaze, had snatched up the light bench and was brandishing it wildly.

"You lay one finger on my precious baby, Mr. Chief," she snarled, like an angry cat, "and I'll brain you with this!"

The men, unheeding, made as though to push past her toward the house. She flung the bench straight across their path. And, in their onward scramble, they stumbled over it.

As they gathered themselves up they saw Mary vanish into the house in the wake of June. The chief—yelling to Farwell to watch the house from the outside—ran in pursuit.

June had fled upstairs. And, halfway up the stairway, Mary was holding aloft a wicker chair.

"You keep back!" she shrielled fiercely to the chief. "Keep back or—"

She hurled the chair full at him as he started to ascend the stairs. And she fled to the upper landing. There, again, with her bare hands this time, she attacked him. He gently thrust to one side the scratching, buffeting old woman and continued his pursuit.

Fighting every step of the way Mary dogged the chief's steps as he burst into the suite of rooms that were June's. They were empty. A window leading out on a balcony stood open. Allen reached it at a bound.

June, fifteen seconds earlier, had fled out upon that balcony and thence down a lattice to the ground. At the very bottom of the lattice Farwell seized her.

"I got her, chief!" he called up, exultantly.

Allen and Mary, descending the

stairs again, had just reached the garden when Lamar arrived at the house. A glance told Max his very direct fears were justified. He had reached the Travis house three minutes too late to save the girl he loved.

For one wild moment Lamar pondered on the idea of covering both her persecutors with his pistol while June escaped. But at once he realized the suicidal folly of such an act. No, his



The Chief Found Himself Confronted by Mary.

one way to help her now was by his wits. The time for force had passed.

He advanced calmly toward the group in the garden. At sight of him Chief Allen shouted:

"We've tracked her down at last, Max, my boy. We've—"

"What is it? What does it all mean?" demanded the bewildered Mrs. Travis, finding voice for the first time.

"It means, madam," replied the chief, "that this young woman isn't your child. She's a slick crook. The daughter of old 'Circle Jim' Borden. Max!" he added, turning to Lamar. "You've worked hard enough on this case. You ought to have some kind of reward. I'm going to give you the honor of making the arrest. Go to it, son."

Max Lamar moved to June's side and touched her on the arm.

"Come, sweetheart," he whispered. "there's nothing else we can do now. But I'm going to get you out of this if it takes my last dollar and my last breath."

As they passed Mrs. Travis on their way to the street June paused and held out her arms. Mrs. Travis recoiled from her as from a snake.

With bent head the girl moved on at her lover's side. The world—her world—seemed at an end. She had not the power to suffer any more. Her brain and heart and body were numb. She walked as if in her sleep.

Next morning as Charles Gordon picked up his newspaper he read, in big headlines, that the mysterious "Red Circle lady" was at last captured; that she was a society girl known as "June Travis," but that she was really the daughter of "Circle Jim" Borden.

Silas Farwell, so ran the story, brought a charge of grand larceny against her and Mrs. Travis refused to help the girl or to have anything to do with her. June's old nurse Mary had used her own savings to provide bail and had taken June away with her to a little apartment in the lower part of the city.

The newspaper account was correct in every detail. Twenty hours earlier June Travis had been one of the most popular girls and one of the richest heiresses in the city. Now, accused of crime, and homeless, she found no friend to help her except the old woman who had nursed and petted her from babyhood.

Max Lamar, it is true, had done all that a mortal man could do; yet he was but a helpless atom in face of the law's iron power. He had arranged that June's detention should be as brief and as little humiliating as possible. Then he had scurried out for bail. But before he could return Mary had provided the needful bond and had spirited June away.

Now, in the tiny apartment with which Mary had brought her, the stricken girl sat alone. The nurse had gone out for supplies. And June, in her squalid little living room, had no companionship but her own tragic thoughts.

She was still stunned and apathetic from the terrific blows fate had dealt her. She sat gazing stonily in front of her, self-hypnotized by her dreary musings.

And, as she sat thus, alone, brooding—a strange thing happened. Or if it did not happen, the dazed girl was at least certain that it did.

Through the closed door of the room emerged a shadowy figure—a formless, vague something, that seemed to gather shape and features as it crept toward her chair.

Gradually bending down above her, the shape became recognizable. It was a thicket man, broad of shoulder, deep of chest. The wraith of a man with leonine head and a shaggy mane of white hair—with a rugged, hopeless face in which smoldered deep, fiery eyes.

On the shadowy right hand that reached out toward the girl glimmered a Red Circle.

The ghost—if ghost it was—was the ghost of "Circle Jim" Borden! June sat motionless, staring with wide, bewildered eyes.

(END OF 13TH INSTALLMENT.)

The Red Circle

by Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.
NOVELIZED FROM PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHEY.

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SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, named from a red birthmark on his back, has served his third prison term. One in each Borden generation, always a criminal, has borne the Red Circle mark. Jim and his son Ted, the only known living of the Borden, are killed. Next day Lamar sees the Red Circle on a woman's hand outside a curtained automobile. June, marked with the Red Circle, robs Grant, a loan shark. Mary, June's nurse, discovers her theft and tells her she is "Circle Jim's" daughter, though Mrs. Travis does not know. Mary tricks Lamar. Lamar visits "Smiling Sam," Jim's old crime partner. Sent to Surfont by Smiling Sam, Alma Le Salle robs the guests at a ball. Lamar follows her back to town, captures her with the jewels, and goes after Smiling Sam. On the edge of a cliff pursuing and pursued engage in deadly combat. Gordon, a fugitive, rescues Lamar, and June in turn saves Gordon from arrest. Smiling Sam sees the Red Circle on June's hand, tells her he knows her secret and follows her to her city home. She helps Gordon to get away, after covering for him the securities receipt which incriminates him by tricking Farwell and Lamar. Lamar suspects June. He captures Smiling Sam. Gordon gives himself up. As he tells June his love, Lamar sees the Red Circle on her hand. Eagan betrays June and dies attempting to escape. June is arrested.

FOURTEENTH INSTALLMENT JUDGMENT DAY

Of course, it was a dream—a vision bred of terror, of suspense, of long-continued nerve strain. At least so June always tried, in later days, to make herself believe.

But she had not been aware of falling asleep. She was sitting there in the squalid little living room of the flat; brooding miserably over the future; and, seemingly, wide awake. Yet, unconsciously, as she sat there, she may have dozed.

For, as clearly as ever in her life she had beheld anything, she saw "Circle Jim" Borden come into the room.

Yes, "Circle Jim" Borden, whose mortal body had been lying in the potter's field this many a day.

"June," breathed the wraith's voice, "I am your father—your father, who died. There is no death, save to the body. And I have come back to you. I have come back, because I cannot rest. You alone can give me rest, my daughter."

He paused. And still that strange paralysis held June spellbound.

"I sought to wipe out forever the Red Circle curse. I sought it by ending the lives of those who bore that curse. But I failed. You escaped me."

The voice was tinged with a tender longing as again the wraith spoke:

"June—my little girl, whom I never knew, in life—you must help me. You, and you alone, can aid me now. I cannot rest until the circle is forever gone. While the curse endures, my torture must endure. I long for rest—for eternal sleep. But there can be no rest for the dead while their evil deeds live on. My sins live on in you, poor daughter of mine. And you alone can crush the awful power of the Red Circle and give me rest. Your fate is in your own hands. Not only your fate, but mine. You have the power, if you will but exert it, to save us. You alone. You can give me the rest I crave."

"I was brought up to crime—to recklessness—to the companionship of outcasts," went on Borden. "There were



Max and Mary Went to Her Aid.

but two clean influences in all my life—my mother and the wife I adored. My mother died before I could understand how much it would have meant to her if I had learned to live the life she wished me to. My wife could have saved me, through love. But she died. She died when you were born. And after that nothing mattered to me. I went on and on, to the end."

A spasm of pain marred his rugged face.

"With you it was different. From babyhood, you were surrounded by every influence for good. Every pow-

er of environment warred valiantly against the hereditary curse. And that saved you from committing sordid crimes, when at last the curse overtook you. You sinned. But always you sinned that others might be happy."

"You can conquer the curse by will-power," urged Borden. "You can destroy the evil that is in you. You can save yourself and me. You can do this. It will be a fearful conflict, but if you exert all your will-power, you can win. Will you do this, June? Answer me!"

June longed to cry out to him that she would make the fight; that she would strive with all her might to stamp out the curse of the Red Circle. But she could not speak.

"You will not speak? You will not help me? You will not help yourself?" stormed the wraith.

"My plea cannot move you?" he rumbled. "Then there is only one way to end it. Even as I hoped, once before, to destroy the Red Circle and its curse. Then, I killed myself and the lad I thought was my son. If I had known you were my daughter, you should have died, too; even as now, you shall die!"

The gnarled hands clutched at June's full, white throat in murderous fury. But the spectral hands—bodiless, shadowy—were harmless against her warm, living flesh.

Slowly the impotently murderous hands withdrew their grip.

"My—my spirit hands have no power against your human body!" he snarled. "I am helpless. It is my punishment."

He bowed his head in his arms; his phantom body twitching with emotion. Then, turning abruptly, without so much as a backward look at the trance-held girl, he melted through the closed door and was gone.

For a moment June remained as he had left her. Then she shuddered from head to heel. Her great dark eyes gradually opened. They were horror-filled and wild.

Dazedly June got to her feet, glaring about the room in abject fright. She moved uncertainly, a step or two. Then her tense nerves giving away, she shrieked aloud and reeled to the floor in a dead faint.

Mary and Lamar, at sound of her cry, rushed headlong into the room. They flew to her aid, applying such restoratives as were within reach. Presently, the swooning girl came to herself. Looking up, she encountered the nurse's loving, frightened old face.

"Oh, Mary!" she gasped, trembling all over. "I've had such an awful dream! Such a horrible dream. Mary! If—it it was a dream! If it was a dream!"

Charles Gordon, in the lounging room of his club, read and reread the flaring headlines that told of June Travis' arrest on the Red Circle charge.

The lawyer was muttering to himself:

"Guilty or not—she saved me from prison. No girl with eyes like hers is a criminal. If—if it wasn't for this damnable embezzlement charge against me, I'd defend her. If only I could get Farwell to admit I'm innocent, I could practice again. And I believe I could clear her. But Farwell would never—"

He glanced up quickly. A man had hurried into the room and was speaking excitedly to a little knot of idlers who sat near the door.

"Well!" Gordon heard the newcomer saying, "I think Silas Farwell has about paid his debt to those employees of his that he's been swindling."

"What's up?" asked Gordon, joining the group.

"I heard this morning that a crowd of them tried to storm his office again, to make him settle. He had a lot of roughneck guards, who scattered them. But just now, as he was coming here from his factory, for lunch, a lot of the strikers mobbed his auto."

"Did they get him? Or—?"

"I don't know. I saw part of the row, from the club steps. It was no affair of mine, to interfere. Let him pay for his crookedness, for all I care. He—"

The speaker was interrupted by the entrance of Farwell himself—hatless, disheveled, panting.

"I got clear from them!" hoarsely panted the fugitive, as he dashed into the room and slammed the door behind him.

He was shaking with fear.

Then Gordon, recognizing the value of the psychological moment, leaped forward and seized Farwell by the torn coat lapels.

"Silas Farwell!" thundered Gordon, his face close to the frightened man's. "Confess that the embezzlement charge you made against me was false! Confess it was a conspiracy—that you lied!"

The onlookers remained outwardly neutral; only pressing closer about the two, as if not wishing to miss a single detail of the scene.

"Confess!" ordered Gordon again.

Farwell, gasping, panting, in utter confusion of mind and body, blinked

stupidly into the sternly compelling eyes of his foe.

"Confess!" shouted Gordon. "Here! What's all this?" demanded someone, in the same breath.

Chief Allen had come in, after heading a squad of policemen who had routed the mob.

Farwell's back was to the door. He had not heard Allen enter, and the chief's words had been drowned in Gordon's threatening shout of "Confess!"

But one of the bystanders laid a detaining hand on the advancing chief's arm, and stopped his progress toward the center of the group. Allen paused a moment, irresolute. And in that moment he heard Gordon repeat:

"Confess your charge against me was a lie!"

Under the blaze of Gordon's hypnotic look, Farwell's nerves went wholly to pieces.

"I—I—" he sputtered.

"Tell the truth!" demanded Gordon. "or I'll drag you by main force out of this club and throw you to the mob of men outside there! The men you've robbed, and who will kill you if they—"

"I—I confess!" croaked Farwell, in stark terror. "I—"

"You confess—what?" insisted Gordon, again shaking his foe back and forth as a puppy might shake a rag.

"I—I confess I 'framed' you," babbled the terrified Farwell. "I—I—the charge I made against you was—was false. I—oh, for God's sake, Gordon!" he howled in abject terror, "don't let those devils out there get hold of me. They'll—"

"One thing more!" broke in Gordon, partly, his face alight at his victory and at the complete mastery which, for the moment, he was exerting over the panic-stricken man. "One thing more: Will you retract your robbery charge against Miss Travis, and vindicate her? Will you—?"

"Hold on, there!" broke in Chief Allen's peremptory voice. "You're going a step too far, Mr. Gordon. I didn't butt in, while you made him clear your own name. And I'm mighty glad you were able to. But I can't have you interfering with the Red Circle case. That's a matter for the police. Let it alone! And let Mr. Farwell go."

At sound of the chief's voice, Farwell's vanished courage returned to him with a rush.

"Am I going to withdraw the charge against the Travis girl?" he sneered.



Mrs. Travis Created a Painful Scene in Court.

"Of course I'm not. I'm going to prosecute her to the bitter end. The thief!"

Chief Allen interposed his muscular bulk between the two men, just in time to prevent Gordon from flying at his enemy's throat.

Next morning, as soon as he could find out where she was living, Gordon went to June's apartment and offered his services as her counsel in the approaching trial. Gratefully, June accepted the offer, being familiar with the reports of his legal skill.

He cut short her thanks by saying: "And now, if you don't mind, Miss Travis, we'll go over the case, together; step by step. If Farwell is the only complainant against you, I've a notion I can shut him up by threats of a perjury charge. You know he swore falsely against me. If there are no other complaints, you are as good as freed."

But there were other complainants. Plenty of them, as Max Lamar and Chief Allen were at that very moment finding out.

Max had dropped into the chief's private office for a chat with his old friend, and to try to enlist his aid in June's behalf. But he found Allen as firm as a rock, in the matter of bringing the Red Circle criminal to justice.

"I'd like to see it your way, Max," said the chief. "But I can't. I'm an officer of the law. The law has been violated. And it's up to me to do all I can to punish the violator. I'm sorry. You've got eloquence enough to move anyone but a veteran thief-taker. But I—"

"No, I haven't," denied Lamar, miserably. "I can't even sway the feelings of one cranky fool of a woman."

"What woman?" asked the chief, curiously.

"Mrs. Travis," growled Lamar. "She came to my office this morning. She remembered I was present when Ted Borden was asphyxiated by old 'Circle Jim.' She knew I'd had some experience with the boy, before that. He

was her son, you know. Though of course she never guessed it and never even heard of him until Miss Travis was accused."

"Well, what—?"

"She came to ask me some questions about him. After the way Mrs. Travis had behaved to June, I was in no mood to handle her with gloves. So I told her, frankly, just what a rotten sort of a cub the boy was. She didn't like it, very much."

"I'm not surprised."

"Then I tried to soften her heart toward June. I used all the eloquence and all the arguments I could muster. It was no use."

"Max," said the chief, suddenly. "You're in love with June Travis!"

"Yes," was Lamar's defiant answer. "I am. And I'm proud of it. I'm going to save her if I can. And if I can't, I'm going to wait—a lifetime, if I have to—till she gets out of prison; and then I'm going down on my knees to her and beg her to be my wife."

"Red Circle and all?"

"Red Circle and all. She's the only girl on earth for me, chief. I—"

Allen's secretary came in with a telegram. The chief glanced at it and passed it over to Lamar. Max read:

"I have a charge to bring against Red Circle Lady for theft of war plans."

"TODD DREW."

"There you are," said Allen. "And that's just the start of it. You remember the case. Drew had plans for a superdestructive war implement. He inherited them from his father, the big inventor. He was just going to sell them to a foreign government when a hand snatched them away from him. It was a woman's hand with a Red Circle on it. He didn't see anything of the woman, except her hand. But it was June Travis. She—"

The office door banged open and a man stamped in. It was Grant, the loan shark.

"The papers say you've caught the Red Circle woman at last. I'm here to make formal charge against her, for locking me in my vault and stealing all those promissory notes from my desk."

Lamar, sick at heart, got to his feet. Without a word of farewell, he started for the door. Allen looked, quizzically, after him, for a moment. Then he summoned his cleverest plain-clothes man.

"Follow Lamar," he ordered in a whisper. "And then go to the flat house where June Travis is staying; and watch it till I send to have you

relieved. I've a notion she's going to try to bait and that Max Lamar's going to try to trip her do it."

The plain-clothes man was off, like a sleuth hound. He found the double task unexpectedly easy. For Lamar was making for June's apartment as fast as he could go.

The crime specialist vanished into the apartment house doorway without once turning around. And the plain-clothes man lounged idly against a tree across the street; smugly certain that he had not been observed.

Now it happened that Max Lamar was one of the most brilliant detectives in America.

The sixth sense, so common to born man-hunters, had told him, before he had gone a hundred yards from police headquarters, that he was followed.

He had not turned around to verify this belief. Partly because there was no need to. Partly because he did not want to put his pursuer on guard.

But the moment he entered the front door of the apartment house, his careless demeanor changed. Stepping quickly to one side, so that he was no longer in view from the street, he turned and moved along the sidewalk of the hallway, toward the front door, again, and presently he came to a window that overlooked the sidewalk.

Flattening himself against the wall, he peeped around the edge of the window frame, for one brief second, only a small portion of his head showing.

That single glimpse told him all he wanted to know. He saw the plain-clothes man loitering with apparent aimlessness on the far side of the thoroughfare. Lamar recognized him as Warren, one of the most tenacious, quick-witted members of the force.

Having made this discovery, Max Lamar continued on his way to June's apartment. Mary let him in. June was still consulting with Gordon, who had just risen to take his leave.

"Mr. Gordon has promised to be my counsel," June told him as the two men cordially shook hands. "He—"

"Good," approved Lamar. "You

couldn't possibly do better, if legal prowess could save you. But," he added, sadly, "it can't."

"Mr. Gordon thinks it can," said June, wondering at her lover's look of blank despair. "He says since Mr. Farwell is the only complainant, he—"

"Farwell isn't the only complainant," corrected Lamar. "I am just from headquarters. While I was there, two more complainants came forward. Todd Drew and Grant."

"Good Lord!" groaned the lawyer, sinking into a chair. "That settles it. There's not an atom of hope!"

"There is hope!" contradicted Lamar, trying to smile encouragement at the wretched girl who was looking in pitiable question from one man to the other. "There is hope. But only one hope."

"What is it?" asked June, feverish with anxiety.

"Just this," decided Max. "And Gordon will agree with me. You must run away."

"Run away? But—"

"You face absolutely certain conviction. Your only chance is to forfeit your bail bond and escape somewhere outside the jurisdiction of the court. Preferably, to Canada."

"You are right," declared Gordon. "It's the only chance. Start at once; before—"

"She can't do that," negated Lamar. "There's a plain-clothes man—Sam Warren—across the street, watching the house. Before you'd gone a block, he'd—"

"But you said there was a chance!" wailed June, distraught.

"There is. As long as Warren's on the job, the chief won't send anyone else to spy on you. We can't do anything by daylight. But as soon as it's dark, I'm going to get rid of Warren."

"How?" asked June, her eyes alight.

"If I can help," added Gordon, "count me in."

"You can help," returned Max, gratefully. "You can help a lot. You and I will come back here at eight this evening, Gordon. I'll bring along a rope and a sack. We'll walk up behind Warren as he stands looking at this house, truss him up, put the sack over his head, trundle him into the alley back there, and tie him up to one of the telegraph poles."

"Good! Oh good!" laughed June in sudden glee.

"I'm game," said Gordon, briefly.

"Meanwhile, Mary," went on Lamar. "Get Miss Travis' things all packed, and be ready to start off with her. I'll buy the railroad tickets today. And I'll have a taxi here to rush you both to the Union Station, the minute we get Warren out of the way."

June's depression was gone. Her eyes sparkled with joyous excitement. Lamar eyed her in wonder. Then his gaze fell to her right hand. The Red Circle was blazing on it like a fiery meteor.

Max's heart went out to the afflicted girl, in a great rush of tenderness.

"Tonight, at eight, then," he said, curtly. "Come along, Gordon. We've a lot to arrange."

June's fevered gaiety carried her through the rest of the day, through the ordeal of hasty packing and other preparation for her flight.

As eight o'clock struck, the trunks and suitcases were at last ready. Mary and June tensely awaited the coming of Gordon and Lamar.

"I'm going to the front room," said Mary, "and try to get a glimpse of them. I do hope they haven't made a batch of tying up that police fellow out there—the nasty spy!"

June left alone, looked around to see if anything had been forgotten in the haste of packing. And, as the scrutiny ended, she chanced to notice the Red Circle pulsing on her hand.

She gazed at it, in a new horror. And, as she looked, the wild elation began to ebb from her brain.

"He said," she murmured, half aloud. "He said—my father said—I could wipe out the curse, by will power. He said I could conquer—and I shall!"

Long she stood there, her eyes fixed on her handback.

"I can conquer, by will power. And, God helping me, I shall!"

Presently, the conflict ceased, as suddenly as it had begun. The beautiful face was calm again—deadly pale, but illumined by a new strength it had never before known. She looked at her hand.

The Red Circle had vanished; never again to return.

Into the apartment burst Lamar and Gordon, with Mary at their heels.

"We got him!" cried Lamar. "We got him, June! We slipped up on him from behind, just as we'd arranged. He's tied and gagged; and he's strapped, hand and foot, to a telegraph pole in the darkest part of the alley. Are you ready, sweetheart? We've no time to waste."

"Thank you, Max," she said, gently. "Thank you, both, from the bottom of my heart, for all you've done and all you've risked for me tonight. But—"

"There's no time for thanks, Miss Travis," interrupted Gordon. "And we don't ask for thanks, either of us. Hurry! We must be off, before—"

"I am not going!" said June, very quietly, yet her face glorified by a new light from within.

"What?" cried Lamar. "Not going? But—"

"I am going to stay here," she made smiling answer, "and face my trial!"

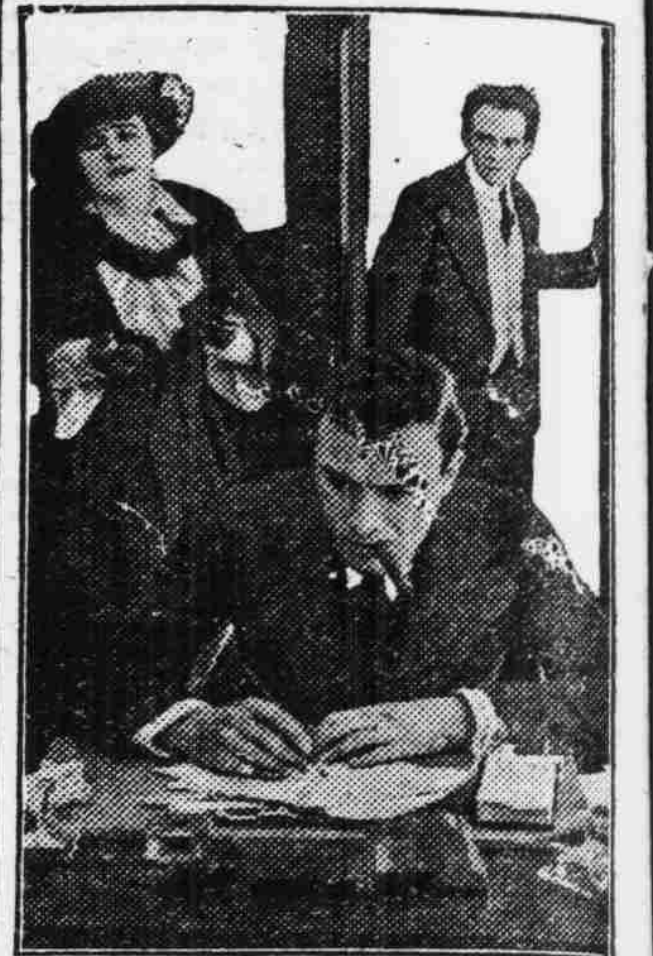
Three months later, the most sensational criminal trial in the history of the city began—the trial of June Travis on the Red Circle charges.

Both Lamar and Gordon had moved heaven and earth in her behalf. But the ugly fact of her guilt remained unshaken. Max had besought her to

marry him before the trial and to face the ordeal as his wife. But very feebly she had put aside the offer.

"If ever I come to you, dear," she had said, "it must be with clean hands and without stain upon my heart. Not till I can be certain the Red Circle has gone forever will I marry you," she had answered. "When I am sure of that—perfectly, perfectly sure of it—then I shall come to you."

Gordon, from the very opening of the trial, struggled with every atom of brain and body to bolster up a hopeless case. He warred against over-



Max Did Not Turn His Head.

whelming odds and never yielded a single step toward fierce opposition. Yet the trial's result was a foregone conclusion.

On the very last day of the trial, Mrs. Travis created a painful scene by rushing into court and throwing her arms around June, weepingly declaring herself a wicked old woman for having turned her back on the girl, and vowing that never again would she forsake her.

Mrs. Travis (her family pride and resentment swept away by a sudden impulse of love toward the stricken girl she had abandoned) held June close pressed to her heart and cried out sobbingly to the judge:

"She is mine! She is my own little girl! And you shan't send her to prison!"

The jury was out less than half an hour and returned grimly to the box with the unanimous verdict of "GUILTY!"

June did not flinch as she heard the word; the most terrible word in all our language. The same strange light that had come into her face on the night when she had refused to escape, still glowed there. Calm, unafraid, she listened to the verdict.

With the same calmness, she rose and stood facing the judge, to receive her sentence.

The judge was an old man. He had known June from babyhood. He had been a close friend of Mrs. Travis' husband, in the early days; and was still a constant visitor at the Travis home. June pitied him for the grim task that was now his.

"Prisoner at the bar," said the judge, his deep voice untinted by any emotion. "A jury of your peers has found you guilty on every count of the various indictments against you. It is a just verdict. In view of the evidence, it was the only verdict the jury could honestly have agreed upon."

"My own duty is equally clear," he went on. "The law, through its administrators, must protect the public. By virtue of my office, it is my prerogative to decide to what extent you are a menace to the public; and to act accordingly. While there can be no reasonable doubt that you committed the crimes whereof you were charged, yet it has also been established—to the court's satisfaction, at least—that those crimes were committed under the stress of a certain psychic influence. The court is also convinced that that evil influence no longer exists. It is the court's belief that the influence will not return, and that you will thus be no longer a menace to society."

"Therefore, I hereby release you, on parole—in the custody of Mrs. Travis!"

The remainder of his speech was drowned in a tumult of applause that the court made no imperative effort to check.

A year dragged by. A long, bitter year to Max Lamar, who had found himself unable to shake June's resolve, and who, to keep his promise had forced himself to remain at a distance from her.

One early spring day he sat in his private office, listlessly going over some papers in a case he was preparing. The warmth and beauty of the day called to him, through the open window. But he gave it no heed and worked on, with a heavy heart.

The office door opened, slowly, as it pushed by timid fingers. Max did not turn his head.

Suddenly, two soft hands were pressed across his eyes; and his head was gently drawn back against a woman's breast. With an unbelieving cry of utter joy he sprang to his feet.

The next instant June Travis was in his arms.

"Max!" she faltered, when at last he let her speak. "I've—I've come—as I promised—to tell you the Red Circle is gone and that it will never come back. And—and to ask you if you'd—if you'd care to replace it—with another circle? A gold one, this time, dear—with a diamond in it!"

(THE END.)